



Forest School Handbook

created by Emily Riddington



contents

<u>What is Forest School?</u> What does Forest School look like at Heacham Junior School? West Norfolk Academy Forest School rules Staffing and responsibilities	<u>Pages</u>
<u>Health and Safety at Forest School</u> Risk Management policy First aid, accident and emergency procedure/ First aid kits Fire safety procedure cancellation procedure Tool policy Food hygiene and campfire cooking policy Toileting, clothing, and drinking water procedures	<u>Pages</u>
<u>child protection and Equality</u> Safeguarding procedure confidentiality procedure Missing child procedure Equal opportunities and inclusion in Forest School Behaviour and anti-bullying policy use of photographs Parental consent and agreement Travelling to Forest school Daily operating procedure	<u>Pages</u>

Appendix

<u>Appendix</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Experiences and activities risk assessment	
Daily risk assessment sheet	
Activity specific risk assessment sheet	
Seasonal risk assessment sheet	
Planning the bigger picture (long term plans and ideas for WNAT)	
Woodland Management Plan	
Woodland Survey Form (site Survey and map)	
Forest School session plan sheet	
Staff handout (info and expectations)	
Heacham Infant School walking risk assessment	
Teacher information page	



What is Forest School?



What does Forest School look like at Heacham Junior School?

Forest School is a unique and inspirational learning process where children can develop their self-worth, while enriching all areas of their learning in a real-life context. It is a process that children at Heacham Junior, Heacham Infant, and Snettisham Primary are privileged to be a part of, where they use the natural environment to deepen their learning and take the time they need to reflect and be inspired. It is a hands-on learning experience, personalised for each child and motivated by their interests and passions. We believe that developing emotional intelligence, self-esteem and social skills are the key foundations that a person needs, and time is taken to develop these. During Forest School, children will be motivated and feel empowered to achieve tasks and activities that challenge their individual aspirations in ways that they learn best. In Forest School, children will develop an understanding and connection with the natural world, appreciate our rural surroundings, work with tools, play, explore, and learn the boundaries of behaviour by managing risks. Our activities and Forest School sessions will depend on the interests, ability and experience of participants. Examples of Forest School activities include:

Exploring the natural environment through their sense of 'awe and wonder'.

Developing a relationship with the environment where children wish to learn how to nurture and manage the natural environment.

Building dens and other structures to enrich their games and imaginative play.

Fires and cooking.

Tree climbing.

Natural crafts.

Using tools, such as knives and saws.

Scavenger hunts and adventure.

Team games.

Den and shelter building.

Seasonal activities.

Storytelling, using the natural world to enable stories to come to life.

Forest School is a rich learning environment that will further enhance the creative, enquiry based teaching that already happens in the classrooms. In order for our schools to be fun and enjoyable places, with happy and successful life-long learners, we all want to reflect the Forest School ethos.

West Norfolk Academy Forest School Rules

Each group of children will be given the opportunity to discuss and create their own Forest School rules. This will begin their journey with high expectations while empowering them and giving them ownership over their sessions. The rules below reflect the values and rules that I will guide the children to follow and will underpin all that we do. The children are reminded of their forest rules before beginning each session. In addition to these rules, separate rules will be discussed and created for more specific activities (such as fire, tools...etc).



The West Norfolk Academy Trust Forest School rules:

- Be kind.** work together and help each other. Don't ruin other people's games.
- No throwing.**
- Make safe choices.** Drag long sticks, do not wave them. Do not put anything near your mouth. Help each other if something is heavy, not move it by yourself.
- Be careful.** check the ground for trip hazards.
- Look after others, and nature.** Ask before I pick anything. Be kind to everyone.
- Be sensible.** Ask an adult if I am not sure.
- Follow the rules.** Always. Especially when using tools or around the fire.

Appropriate clothing must always be worn but will vary depending on the weather.

children must always wear wellies, old boots or trainers



Staffing and responsibilities

Name	Job role	Signature	Date
MS L Jackson	Headteacher Safeguarding lead		
MRS E Hunt	Deputy headteacher		
MISS E Riddington	Forest school leader Qualified teacher		
MR B Griffin	chair of governors		

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that the school has the correct insurance to cover the activities carried out in Forest School sessions. This insurance has been discussed with the Academy Trust prior to Forest School sessions beginning, and approved.

Any first aid can be carried out by any of the staff members present at forest school (providing they have had basic first aid training), however, it is advised that a 'Forest School first aid' trained staff member (Miss Riddington) oversees and is aware of any first aid carried out if it is not them. Their outdoor first aid qualification must be renewed every three years. Staff are to fill out the first aid book (as they would normally) to report any first aid. Any first aid must also be logged into the 'near miss and accident log book' (Hungry caterpillar book) to enable the Forest School leader to review and monitor safety and risks. The caterpillar book will be kept in the health and safety toolbox. This will be kept on top of the cabinet, near the fire circle, under the oak tree.



A minimum of 2 staff members can run a session, however the ratios in correspondence with the risk assessments will limit the activities available for the children. A level 3 forest school leader must always be present for a Forest School session with at least one other. If no Forest School leader is present, outdoor learning sessions can still happen in the forest area, but Forest School related activities must not take place.

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that they follow the school policies.

It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader to:

Either carry out, or work with other adults to carry out and check risk assessments. A risk assessment of the forest area must occur before each session, or occasionally on arrival with the children for educational purposes. In addition to this, risk assessments will be carried out for each activity that may occur during the session (such as any individual tools being used, fire, shelter building...etc), as well as a seasonal risk assessment each term. Examples of these can be found in the appendix this handbook but will be filled in by hand.

Ensure all of the first aid kits are fully replenished after use, including first aid forms.

Ensure the tools and kit used are safe for use, looked after, and stored correctly.

Inform all staff involved in a Forest School session about the risks and how to manage them by showing them the risk assessments or talking and demonstrating safe practice.

Advise others of how to best keep safe when involved in different activities.

To ensure that crb/dbs checks have been carried out prior to an adult helping at Forest School.

To ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed precisely by all adults, as they would be in school.

To spread the Forest School ethos across the school. Involve and inform people wherever possible about Forest School (such as by running a staff meeting, having a Forest School section on the school websites, having a forest school display at each school involved, making a Forest School instagram account, making information booklets... etc).

Health and Safety at Forest School

The Forest School approach values the importance of managing risks and enabling children to take risks. This not only teaches them the importance of being safety conscious, but it also empowers children to be trusted and responsible for themselves. A risk-benefit analysis will be carried out by the Forest School leader in advance to ensure that the benefits of the activity outweigh the risk, and identify any control actions that can be followed to reduce the likelihood of a risk occurring. We will carry out seasonal risk assessments, as well as daily (prior to each session), and specific activity risk assessments.

At Heacham Junior School we will follow the '5 Step process' when managing risks to ensure that the risk assessments are thorough and effective:

1. Look for the hazards.
2. Decide who may be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing controls are adequate or whether more should be done. Forest School activities may only proceed if the remaining risk is deemed to be low (green on the risk management grid).
4. Record findings on our school risk assessment sheets (seasonal, daily, or specific activity risk assessments depending on the risk). Add in any daily amendments to standing risk assessments.
5. Review assessments on a regular basis by discussing with the children and adults present (if circumstances change that could affect the rigour of the assessment) and revise if necessary.

Risk Management policy

We believe that, while there are risks that must be considered, there are also a wide range of potential benefits that we do not want children in West Norfolk Academy Trust to miss out on being a part of. We also recognise that taking risks is an important part of learning and developing and we want to provide a safe and supportive environment in which participants can learn about risks, challenges and personal safety. We will always ensure that appropriate and regular risk assessments are carried out, or involve the children in carrying out the risk assessments too. Wildlife and different weather conditions can create new challenges and changes to the forest area. These will need to be assessed prior to each session and may alter previously arranged activities.

The following diagram will be displayed on the 'health and safety toolbox' in the forest area to help support adults and children in managing and reducing risk. Adults will be encouraged where possible to do risk assessments together with the children to increase awareness, have professional discussions regarding risk management, and provide a broader perspective.

		Impact				
		Trivial	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Probability	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Moderate	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
	Likely	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Very likely	Medium	Medium	High	High	High

Health and safety grid reference: www.justgetpmp.com



Adults and children can use the table to increase awareness and assess risks to then reduce the probability and likelihood of an accident happening. The table allows us to think about the severity of a risk, alongside how likely it is to happen to weigh up it's safety. Activities must only occur if they fall into the green 'low' risk area. If an activity falls into the red 'high' area, the activity must not take place. If an activity falls into the orange 'medium' risk area, control actions must take place and a judgement must be made as to whether or not it is an appropriate risk to make (if it can be reduced to a green 'low' risk). Procedures can happen in response to a risk assessment (such as making specific rules to reduce the risk) to then enable an activity to move into the green 'low' risk area, allowing it to then take place.

Although unlikely, we are aware that due to changes in circumstance and the child-initiated approach to Forest School, risks may change or new ones arise. In order to manage these risks effectively during the forest sessions, discussions with staff and children must be had to revise the risks, promote awareness and make sensible decisions. Staffing should be a minimum of 1 adult : 15 children, but preferably 1 adult : 10 children ratio or higher. One of the adults present must be a level 3 Forest School leader.

First aid, accident and emergency procedure

Minor Incident

1. Pupil/adult assessed by member of staff (first aid trained).
2. Treat as required (first aid kit stored in 'health and safety toolbox'), gaining additional assistance if necessary (additional support from other staff members, or asking an 'outdoor first aid' trained member to carry out first aid if more appropriate).
3. Write in the first aid book by the school office (as you would normally). Ensure other schools follow their own first aid procedures when they return to their school if not a pupil at Heacham Junior School.
4. Fill in the 'near miss and accident log book' (Hungry caterpillar book) to record incident. It is also important to log any 'near miss' accidents to monitor these. **This is kept in the 'health and safety toolbox'.**

Major Incident

1. Member of staff to attend to casualties immediately (preferably an 'outdoor first aid' trained member of staff, but if not they must be informed immediately to then attend to casualty).
2. Ensure the rest of the group have 'tools down' and are safe with another adult. Seek the attention of another staff member.
3. Assess the situation and distinguish between walking wounded (person is able to walk to get help- e.g broken arm), or a more serious accident (person is unable to walk- e.g unconscious). Attract the attention of the school front office by calling (Forest School leader to have a charged phone), sending the 'emergency card' (kept in the 'Health and safety toolbox'), or through a sensible child or adult (as we would in school). School office to contact emergency services if necessary (999) and inform parent.
4. Monitor incident and make notes while comforting casualty.
5. When deemed safe, get the rest of the children with their designated adult to go back inside until the emergency is dealt with.
6. complete incident report form/write in 'log book'.

Senior leadership team to complete online reporting forms, review incident, review our practice, and review the forest rules to ensure quality assurance. Report to RIDDOR for any major incidents.

If the casualty is an adult, the same process (above) applies. Tools must go down immediately and a sensible child must inform the office as soon as possible to enable another first aid trained member of staff to come to the casualty. The children must be taken inside as soon as possible and appropriate actions must be followed according to the step by step process above.

First aid kits

As well as the first aid kits available in school, a forest first aid kit and a fire safety first aid kit will also be available in the forest area for quick and easy access. They will be kept in the 'health and safety toolbox' on the cabinet near the oak tree. It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader to ensure that the first aid kits are replenished after use.

The forest first aid kit will contain:

Disposable gloves

First aid forms and a pen/ Near miss and accident log book (Hungry caterpillar book)

Bandages

Paramedic scissors

Tweezers

Foil blanket

Eyewash

Alcohol free wipes

Safety pins

Plasters

Micropore tape

Medical information and medication for individuals

The emergency fire safety kit will contain:

Fire blanket

Pair of fire gloves

Burns kit

Water container to store emergency water

A flexi tub

Administering Medicines/items to children

As we are on school grounds, the children who take regular medication will be able to continue to do so as they usually do in school. If the child is coming from Heacham Infant or Snettisham Primary School it is the responsibility of their class teacher to ensure medication is brought to the Junior School site and taken as it should be. If sun cream or insect spray is required, the children will be encouraged to apply it themselves while being observed by an adult. Information on specific children and their medication (if necessary) will be available in the 'health and safety toolbox', but class teachers must make the Forest School Leader aware of any medical information before carrying out Forest School with the children.

Fire safety procedure

be fearless in
the pursuit of
what sets your
soul on fire.

Fire is hugely powerful and often creates a calming atmosphere that encourages people to self reflect. Fire can ignite a rich sense of awe through it's power and beauty. Fire is mesmerizing and can fascinate people for hours, stimulating the senses through it's vibrant colours, unique smell, warm glow, and atmospheric crackling sounds

Fire preparation

The fire will always be lit in a safe place. This safe place has already been prepared in the centre of the woodland space. The fire will be lit in a fire pit and always positioned in the centre of the circle away from low canopy branches.

check the floor in the fire circle to ensure there are no tripping hazards (pull up any weeds etc).

children must all understand and agree to follow the fire rules before being a part of the experience.

The seats are around 1.5 metres from the fire pit with regular exit paths at regular intervals between log seats. The seats must be stable and sturdy.

The children must always walk around the outside of the fire circle.

A fire blanket must be hung close by the fire pit along with the fire emergency kit.

Fire lighting

A Forest School leader or trusted adult must light the fire, and be at the fire at all times.

Do not throw anything onto the fire.

Sitting in the line of smoke must be avoided. A way to deal with smoke can be given to the children if required. They can be advised to turn their head to one side, put their hand across their face, closing their eyes and counting to 30. they can also be advised to leave the fire circle and find a seat out of the smoke.

children must only go towards the fire pit (such as for cooking) under the direction of the Forest School leader or allocated adult. When at the fire pit, children must be kneeling to avoid tripping into the fire.

children must be reminded about waving sticks (skewers), and also hot food and drink.

Fires must be lit using matches, fire flint, or fire steels.

Sticks and wood (no plastic) must be placed onto the fire from the side and not over the flame.

Fire extinguishing

All fires must be distinguished at the end of a session.



Water must always be available to extinguish the fire.

There must be no smoke or steam left.

Large remains of wood must be separated.

Preferably, the fire should be put out once the fire has burned down to ash. When extinguishing the fire, the Forest School leader or allocated adult will use the container of water (part of the fire kit) to gradually pour water onto the fire, controlling the smoke levels by letting it burn down before adding some more water. Using a long stick the ash/water can be stirred to ensure all of the fire is put out. Children must still be reminded that the fire pit and the ash is very hot and the fire rules still apply. Once the water and ash are cool and there is no smoke or steam left, the ash and water can be removed from the fire pit. All of the fire safety equipment must be put away in the 'health and safety toolbox'.

Fire safety tips

Object	Used for	Safety tips
<p data-bbox="193 752 252 779">Grill</p> 	<p data-bbox="509 752 687 904">To provide a surface to cook foods or boil kettle.</p>	<p data-bbox="826 752 1007 779">Do not touch it.</p> <p data-bbox="826 824 1353 896">Only go towards it under the permission of an adult.</p> <p data-bbox="826 936 1198 963">Always kneel around the fire pit.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1008 1378 1079">Always use cooking utensils to move the food on the grill.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1120 1034 1146">check it is sturdy.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1191 1326 1263">Do not touch it even when the fire has been extinguished (adult to use fire gloves).</p>
<p data-bbox="201 1317 376 1344">campfire kettle</p> 	<p data-bbox="509 1317 708 1424">To boil water for hot drinks and cooking.</p>	<p data-bbox="826 1317 1126 1344">A child must not touch it.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1388 1358 1415">Adults must only pick up by holding the handle.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1460 1398 1568">Be careful that it is not too full (as water could bubble out of the spout). Also be careful that it is not too empty.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1612 1390 1684">Be careful of the steam coming out of the spout. Do not lean over it.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1729 1358 1756">Remind children that it contains boiling water.</p> <p data-bbox="826 1800 1369 1953">When pouring, place the cup on the ground or sturdy log, and pour away from the child (never pour into a cup that a child is holding incase it splashes).</p>

		<p>Make sure the lid is securely on.</p> <p>Be careful when removing the lid.</p> <p>Ensure it is in a stable position.</p>
<p>Skewers</p> 	<p>To push food onto to cook over the fire.</p>	<p>Do not wave around.</p> <p>Remind children that the end is sharp and pointed.</p> <p>Ensure there is plenty of handle space to hold the food over the fire, put it down and pick it up.</p> <p>Be careful when putting the hot end into their mouth.</p> <p>If dropped or touches the floor, get a new one and do not eat from it.</p> <p>Do not share skewers with others.</p>
<p>Pans</p> 	<p>To cook food in.</p>	<p>Do not touch the pans.</p> <p>Only adults are to touch the handles.</p> <p>Children must only stir or serve using utensils under the instruction and supervision of an adult, wearing fire glove.</p> <p>Do not lean over the pans (and be careful of the steam when stirring).</p> <p>Stir gently to avoid splashing.</p> <p>Do not let foods boil dry.</p>
<p>Hot food and drink</p> 	<p>To enjoy! (and taste new things)</p>	<p>Remind children that food and drink cooked on the fire is boiling hot and they must be sensible in waiting for it to cool down before eating and drinking. Adults are to help advise the children on suitable times to begin eating and drinking.</p> <p>Prior to Forest School session, pre-cooked and other food is to be stored in the fridge or freezer in the cookery room (if it won't fit, seek permission to store in the kitchens). It must be</p>

		<p>kept in a plastic tub with a lid until use.</p> <p>A clean chopping board from the cookery box can be taken outside and used for a clean surface if needed to prepare food . Hands must be washed.</p> <p>Make sure food is thoroughly cooked.</p> <p>Follow food hygiene rules.</p>
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cancellation procedure

It is ultimately up to the headteacher, Louise Jackson, to decide if a Forest School session should be cancelled. This decision can be advised by the Forest School leader. If the headteacher is absent it is then the responsibility of the deputy headteacher, Emma Hunt. If Forest School is cancelled, it is the responsibility of the headteacher or the deputy headteacher to make prior arrangements for the session.

circumstances where Forest School would have to be cancelled:

If no Forest School leader is present. In this case, outdoor learning sessions could still happen in the woodland area, but Forest School related activities must not take place.

If only 1 member of staff is available to run the session.

In extreme weather conditions (such as strong winds 42mph or above).

Tool policy

Using 'real tools' enables children to learn a life skill alongside developing physically, achieving ambitious goals, and developing self-confidence. Trusting children with powerful tools is empowering for children and enables them to feel like their potential is limitless.




General rules to be followed when using tools

Tools must only be taken by a child under the permission of a Forest School leader (preferably) or allocated adult. Children will always have adult supervision when collecting, transporting and using tools. Tools will be monitored and counted in and out by a responsible adult. Tools must be stored and locked away safely when not in use. Children will lose permission to use tools if they do not follow the forest rules.

- Hand tools are to be maintained kept in 'good working order' by the Forest School Leader.
- The Forest School leader will inspect the tools before use to ensure safety and that the tools are in 'good working order'. It is worth modelling this to the children for educational purposes.
- Children and adults will be taught how to handle tools properly and to treat them with respect.
- Whilst using tools the staff to child ratio is dependent on the tool in use and the child/children using the tool. The ratios will vary depending on the group/age/ability/needs of the children.
- Tools will be kept in a padlocked container and only removed by the Forest School leader or responsible adult. Some tools may be kept locked in the gardening shed.
- No running or pointing with tools.
- The blade guards must be on all tools when not in use (hand saw, bow saw, knife sheaf). Adults must remove and put back the guards unless the children are deemed capable.
- Children must never touch the blades.
- Nothing can be 'dangling' when using tools. It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader or allocated adult to ensure that long hair is tied back, and suitable clothing is worn (no scarves dangling). No gloves to be worn when using tools.
- A safe working space, along with being aware of what a 'blood bubble' is (sufficient space around the tool/tool user) must be considered when using tools.
- Children understand that when they hear 'tools down' they must safely put down their tools.

Tool use

The Forest School leader will decide if the age group/ individual child is ready and safe for using each individual tool, and if it is the correct tool for the job at hand.

Tool	Best used for	Safety tips
<p data-bbox="193 461 261 488">knife</p> 	<p data-bbox="456 461 740 533">Whittling wood, cutting cord, chopping food.</p>	<p data-bbox="748 461 1401 913">The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Starting with the 3 point safety stance or safe seated position and checking there is a safe distance from others around the tool user ('blood bubble'). The Forest School leader demonstrates the scraping technique away from themselves. The other hand manipulates the stick above the whittling area, keeping the knife work safely away from the body. The adult will closely supervise the child behind their non dominant hand whilst using the tool. No throwing.</p>
<p data-bbox="193 960 277 987">Gimlet</p> 	<p data-bbox="456 960 724 987">For making small holes.</p>	<p data-bbox="748 960 1401 1285">The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool, demonstrating the technique on an appropriate wooden block to show how to hold the tool safely, keeping vertical, and how to support the wood securely. Wood must be braced securely and the gimlet must not be waved around. Keep your hands at the safe side of the wood. No throwing.</p>
<p data-bbox="193 1335 293 1361">Bow saw</p> 	<p data-bbox="456 1335 740 1832">For cutting green wood such as tree branches and shrubs, or sawing logs to size. They are better for speed as apposed to a neat finish. These require less physical strength than the folding saw and can be used in pairs, so a better saw to begin learning with.</p>	<p data-bbox="748 1335 1401 1955">The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Starting with the safe standing stance, brace the wood securely, and checking the 'blood bubble', the Forest School leader will demonstrate the sawing technique with the blade cover on first, showing the children how to hold the tool safely in the knuckle grip and how to keep the other hand safe from the blade. If this is tricky, it may be suggested that the child holds the saw with both hands securely and safely and another adult/child to help support the wood at a safe distance. Depending on age and ability, the leader may take the opposite end of the bow saw to assist the child with the sawing motion, taking it in turns to push-pull, this could also progress to two children</p>

		working together. It is useful to do several cuts in one direction before sawing. When sawing wood, hands must be kept away from the blade and the wood must be braced securely. No throwing.
<p>Folding saw</p> 	For cutting branches and small logs. They can get into more difficult spots (that perhaps the bow saw cannot).	The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Starting with the safe standing stance, brace the wood securely, and checking the 'blood bubble', the Forest School leader will demonstrate how to hold the tool safely in the knuckle grip and how to keep the other hand safe from the blade. It is useful to do several cuts in one direction before sawing. When sawing wood, hands must be kept away from the blade and the wood must be braced securely. No throwing.
<p>Hand drill</p> 	For drilling holes into wood. This requires more gross motor downward pressure as apposed to fine motor wrist twisting (like the gimlets) therefore, a good first step for hole making.	The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. The Forest School leader will demonstrate the drilling technique on an appropriate, braced, wood block, showing how to hold the tool safely with both hands, keeping vertical, and pressing down while turning the handle. Be careful of pushing too hard that the drill bit snaps. Do not apply too much pressure to initially incase it slips. No throwing.
<p>Mallet</p> 	For bashing, den building, wedging.	The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Standing or kneeling in a sturdy position, use the mallet to bash the job at hand, ensuring the other hand is either on the mallet or in a safe position. checking the mallet is held securely, hit the mallet away from your body, and ensure you are a safe working distance from others. Do not throw the mallet.
<p>Vegetable peeler</p> 	To peel vegetables. <i>Please note: Do not use for peeling anything other than vegetables.</i>	The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool, demonstrating a safe seated position and the scraping action away from the body using the dominate hand. The other hand to be placed a safe distance from the peeling, holding the vegetable

		securely. Use for peeling, not poking. No throwing.
<p>Loppers</p> 	<p>For pruning and cutting smaller branches with less effort.</p>	<p>The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Check around for a 'blood bubble' of space around the tool user. Ensure that only the task at hand is in the way of the lopper blades. Where possible, the blades should be held upwards to create a 'crocodile's smile' (the curved blade under the straight blade). With one hand on each of the handles, carefully push the handles together to cut. Always hold the loppers closed and facing down when not in use. Check where the snipped branch will land to ensure it doesn't land on anyone. If the blades get stuck in the branch, try to carefully swivel the loppers to release them or ask a grown up to help you. Do not throw.</p>
<p>Handsaw</p> 	<p>For cutting branches, planks, pallets, and small logs.</p>	<p>The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Starting with the safe standing stance, brace the wood securely, and checking the 'blood bubble', the Forest School leader will demonstrate how to hold the tool safely in the knuckle grip and how to keep the other hand safe from the blade. It is useful to do several cuts in one direction before sawing. When sawing wood, hands must be kept away from the blade and the wood must be braced securely. Check for where the wood will drop to ensure it does not fall on feet. Do not throw.</p>
<p>Rake</p> 	<p>clearing pathways, leaves, soil or wood chip.</p>	<p>The children must hold the rake with two hands and drag. Children must be encouraged to use the rake in an upright position to prevent back ache. Children to look carefully around them to ensure they do not touch anyone with the rake. Do not throw.</p>
<p>Secateurs</p> 	<p>For pruning and cutting smaller branches with less effort.</p>	<p>The Forest School leader will demonstrate safe use with children and adults in small groups or on a 1:1 basis when initially using the tool. Check around for a 'blood bubble' of space around the tool user. Ensure that only the task</p>

		at hand is in the way of the blades. carefully push the handles together to cut as they would with scissors. Always hold the blade closed when not in use. Do not throw.
<p>Wheel barrow</p> 	For manoeuvring resources.	Make sure the contents is not too heavy and is balanced. Do not over-fill. check the tyre is pumped up. Watch where you are going when using it. Hold with two hands (one on each handle) at all times. Keep your back straight and use your legs to lift. Be careful on uneven ground.
<p>Spade</p> 	For digging and for moving resources.	Do not throw spade, or whatever is on the spade. Use carefully (check where others are to avoid hurting them). Do not carry anything too heavy. Do not throw.

Food hygiene and campfire cooking policy

All participants on activities will be encouraged to wash their hands with water and soap, or cleaned with hand gel, before preparing, cooking, or eating food.

chopping and preparing food must be on a clean surface (preferably bring out a clean chopping board).

All food waste must be disposed of to avoid rodents.

Food that must be kept refrigerated or frozen, or pre-cooked food must be kept in a plastic tub with a lid indoors and brought out just before the session. If it will not fit in fridge/freezer in staff room seek permission from the cooking staff to keep in the school kitchens.

Toileting procedure

Before a Forest School session, children will be given the opportunity to go to the toilet. Due to the close proximity of the school to the forest area during a Forest School session, children needing the toilet will be able to independently take themselves to the toilet after informing a staff member that they need to go. Some children, such as young children or those from Heacham Infant and Snettisham Primary (who do not know the site as well), may require an adult or another child to assist them. This must be discussed and managed between the adults.



clothing

“There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing”.

The children will participate in Forest School sessions in almost all weathers, to enjoy the forest throughout the four seasons. Before entering the forest, children will be dressed appropriately for the weather. At Heacham Infant, Junior, and Snettisham Primary school we request that children bring a 'Forest School Kit' to ensure that parents take responsibility to ensure they are appropriately dressed. children will be asked to bring a weatherproof coat, and appropriate shoes (wellies, boots or old trainers) from home, as well as warm joggers, hoodie, spare socks and preferably waterproof trousers too. If the children are getting cold, adults can initiate an active game to play, sit by a fire or share a shelter to help warm up. In rare cases if this is not appropriate for the child, they can return to the classroom supervised by an adult. Parents will be informed and reminded to send their children with additional layers if the weather is forecast to be particularly extreme. If the weather is due to be hot, it will be advised that children are still dressed in long sleeves and trousers, but bring a hat/sun cream to protect them from the sun.

Drinking water

We are running Forest School on a school site and the children are asked to bring a bottle of water daily. The children will be allowed to bring it to their Forest School session and leave in a designated area, but the children will also be allowed access to go and get it at all times if they want to (School such close proximity). Following the policy in school, children will be able to drink their water as frequently as they like. If a child has no water left they will be able to gain permission to go back into school to re-fill, and any child without a bottle of water can use the water fountains in school providing they inform an adult. They will be able to access the school the same way as they can for toileting. Drinking water in some cases may also be already available in the forest depending on the activities.

child protection and Equality

Safeguarding procedure

At Heacham Junior, Heacham Infant, and Snettisham Primary our safeguarding lead is the headteacher, Louise Jackson, and in her absence the deputy headteacher, Emma Hunt. It is our responsibility as teaching staff and as adults to promptly report any concerns to the safeguarding lead, just as we do within school. All teaching staff will have had safeguarding training, and know the process to report any concerns. It is the responsibility of the Forest School leader to make volunteers aware of the appropriate way to record any safeguarding concerns. This must be recorded on the child protection form (whether it be a serious concern or a 'niggling doubt'). These forms will be kept in the 'health and safety toolbox'.



Dates, times, and a context must always be recorded and signed by the adult. No leading questions can be asked and adults must not promise to keep anything a secret. Ensure that any notes that are made are disposed of by shredding them or burning them after writing them up onto the form. It is important that any notes are accurate. It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns (such

as by asking further questions to the child), or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. For more information, please see the 'Safeguarding policy' on the school website.

confidentiality procedure

An electronic or manual register will be taken in the classroom by the class teacher before entering the forest area. The Forest School Leader will record the number of children present for that Forest School session before going to the forest area. Any confidential documents, such as medical information, will be kept in school, as it is not necessary to keep all information on the children in the forest area when the school is of such close proximity and is accessible if required.

Missing child procedure

Although unlikely as our forest area is on the school site, missing children must be reported to the front office by sending a sensible child, making a phone call to the school office, or having 'tools down' to spare an adult. Adults and children must communicate where they are (eg if a child goes to the toilet, or to get some water), to avoid any unnecessary worry. Regular head counts can also occur to monitor the children, including one at the end of the session when the children gather around the fire circle.

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.

Behaviour and anti-bullying policy


During the first Forest School session, the children will discuss and agree on their 'forest rules' regarding respect, supporting one another, and behaviour. We will approach the subject of 'bullying' and discuss it positively through the importance of kindness, helping one another, and sharing. The children will be reminded of these rules and agree to follow them at the beginning of each Forest School session. We want everyone to feel safe, happy, and comfortable. Any behaviours that jeopardise the health, safety and well-being of others will be recorded by the Forest School leader, reported to the headteacher, and re-considered for joining in with Forest School.

Use of photographs

Each child on entry will have been given a consent slip for Forest School participation which includes consent to share photos and videos on 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 iPads or cameras.

Parental consent and agreement

Parents will be given information all about Forest School to help gain interest, excitement, and promote the Forest School ethos. This form 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 Forest School instagram page: [forestschool_wnat](#) and the school websites will be regularly updated to help engage parents and promote the benefits of Forest School throughout the year. An example of the parent information form that each parent must receive is displayed below:




Forest School **Eco-Schools**

Forest school is a unique and inspirational learning process where children can develop their self-worth, while enriching all areas of their learning in a real-life context. It is a process that children are privileged to be a part of, where they use the natural environment to deepen their learning and take the time they need to reflect and be inspired. It is a hands-on learning experience, personalised for each child and motivated by their interests and passions. We believe that developing emotional intelligence, self-esteem and social skills are the key foundations that a person needs, and time is taken to develop these. During Forest School, children will be motivated and feel empowered to join in with new experiences. They can choose to participate in activities that challenge their individual aspiration, in ways that they learn best. In Forest School, children will develop an understanding and connection with the natural world, appreciating the rural surroundings that we live in. The children will have opportunities to work with tools, play, explore, and learn the boundaries of behaviour by managing risks.

Emily Riddington is a Level 3 Forest School Leader and qualified teacher. She has been employed by West Norfolk Academy Trust to bring an exciting new teaching approach to our schools. She will be delivering Forest School to the children at Hesham Infant, Hesham Junior, and Snettisham Primary School.

our activities and Forest School sessions will depend on the interests, ability, and experience of individuals. Examples of Forest School activities include:

- Exploring the natural environment through their sense of 'awe and wonder'.
- Developing a relationship with the environment where children wish to learn how to nurture and manage the natural environment.
- Building dens and other structures to enrich their games and imaginative play.
- Fires and cooking on a campfire.
- Natural crafts.
- Using tools, such as knives and saws.
- Scavenger hunts and adventure.
- Team games.
- Den and shelter building.
- Seasonal activities.
- Storytelling, using the natural world to enable stories to come to life.



Forest School is an approach that will enhance the creative, inquiry based teaching that already happens in the classrooms. It is another approach to help make our school a fun, memorable, and enjoyable place, with happy and successful life-long learners.


To join us on our amazing journey, please follow
Instagram: [forestschool_wnat](#)

...and find more information on our School websites.


We will be outdoors in almost all weathers, so please provide your child with a 'Forest school kit' of old clothes to ensure they are dressed appropriately. This could include:


- warm clothes such as jogging bottoms and a jumper
- gloves/hat
- spare socks
- old trainers or wellies

Waterproof trousers would also be fantastic if you are able to include these.



For more information please see
↑ MISS Riddington.








Forest School Parental consent Form

child's name

School (please tick)

 <p>Heacham Junior</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	 <p>Heacham Infant</p> <input type="checkbox"/>	 <p>Snettisham Primary</p> <input type="checkbox"/>
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Year group/class

I do I do not

Give consent for my child to participate in Forest School

I do I do not

Give consent for my child's photo or video to be shared on the website, social media, or in the newspaper

Reminder: we will be outdoors in almost all weathers, so please provide your child with a 'Forest School kit' of old clothes to ensure they are dressed appropriately. This could include;

warm clothes such as jogging bottoms and a jumper
gloves/hat
spare socks
old trainers or wellies
waterproof trousers would also be fantastic if you are able to include these.

Please complete and return to the school office by Monday 10th September

Travelling to Forest School

children from Heacham Junior School will be collected from their classrooms and walked out to the woodland. children from Heacham Infant School will be met at their school and walked around to the Junior school (see risk assessment for walking to school in the appendix). children at Snettisham Primary School will be driven to Heacham Junior in Smithdon High School's minibus. This bus will be driven by Darren Wing (Snettisham caretaker/ qualified minibus driver). In his absence, other academy drivers can be contacted. If the bus becomes unavailable, the school office can try calling Springwood High School and attempt to borrow their academy minibus. The children from Snettisham Primary will be met at the bus parking space in the Junior School car park, and walked across to the woodland.

Daily operating procedure

Before the session

- check enough adults are present and the weather is suitable.
- Do a daily risk assessment of the forest area and read the relevant activity specific risk assessments..
- check the planning and inform adults.
- Gather and set up any activity based resources (including water/soap for hand washing, water to extinguish fire...etc).

write down the number of children present and any medical requirements or additional needs to be aware of.

Ensure children have all been to the toilet.

Get dressed in appropriate clothing (coats, waterproof trousers, gloves, wellies or trainers, suncream, hats...etc). Gather water bottles to take if necessary.

Beginning

walk to the forest area and re-cap the forest rules/promise to follow the rules..

Gather around the fire circle for the session stimulus (a letter, a gift...etc) and discuss ideas.

Middle

child's choice.

FS Leader and adults to model FS activities for children to choose from (risks will be continually assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce or remove any risks found).

End

Tidy up the forest area, making sure everything goes back tidily into the sheds where it belongs (FS leader to check all tools have been returned safely and are in good working order).

Gather around the fire circle for a story for a reflection activity.

Go back to school and get changed.

After the session

Share any photos on the FS instagram account/ Facebook page/ school website.

Add to children's topic books with their FS learning and add to FS journey in my sketchbook.

check for/dispose of or recycle any rubbish.

clean tools and make sure the resources are tidy, organised, and topped up (eg first aid kits, legal paperwork etc...)

FS leader to evaluate and reflect on the session, making plans for future sessions based on the children's interests and progression.