


# Campsbourne Primary School Forest School Handbook



Policy Originator	Sharon Hodson and Fiona Beaumont
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Head Teacher	

## Contents Page

Introduction - What is Forest School?	3
Benefits of Forest School	5
The Wild Passport	5
Forest School Activities	6
Clothing Requirements	7
Toileting Policy	7
Equipment	8
Fire Policy	9
Food Hygiene	10
Forest School Equipment - Kit bag for emergency	11
First Aid Kit	12
Forest School Code of Conduct	13
Woodland Management Plan	15
Environmental Impact Plan	16
Ecological Impact	17
Forest School Emergency Procedures	17
Staff Training	18
Health and Safety	19
Death and Serious Incident Procedure	20
Safeguarding Policy	20
Equal Opportunities - Special Educational Needs - Behavioural Management	21 22
Forest School Routine - Early Years, KS1 And KS2	22 23
Role Specification- Forest School Lead	23
Risk Assessments - Safe use of tools - Forest school site risk assessment	24 26
Contingency and Cancellation	28
Transport	28
Insurance Requirements	28
Parental/ Carer Communication and Permissions	29
References	29
<a href="#">Appendix One – Parental/Carer Communication Permissions Form</a>	

***Please note that the information outlined in this handbook will be reviewed annually but may be influence earlier by new guidelines.***

## **1. Introduction: What is Forest School?**

The philosophy and roots of Forest School can be traced back to a number of sources as far back as the 19th Century. This includes the ideas from educationalists such as Rousseau and Froebel, the woodcraft movements, the native Americans and the Quakers. In 1928, in the UK, a Forest School was formed in the New Forest. The two founding organisations, the 'Woodcraft movement' and 'Forest School camp' still exist today. In the 1950's the original Forest School concept was developed in Sweden. Children build self-esteem and independence through hands-on play in a woodland setting.

This Swedish concept was then further developed by Scandinavia and other European countries and it was established in Denmark in the 1980's. In 1993, a group of nursery nurse students and professionals from Bridgewater College, Somerset visited Denmark to observe Danish Forest School for themselves. What they discovered was so inspirational that they brought the concept back to Britain and set up the first British Forest School. Since then the movement has grown quickly. Forest School can now be delivered alongside conventional education methods to provide children with the ability to transfer their skills they learn into everyday life. The focus is on reconnecting (or in some cases 'connecting') children with their local outdoor environment, giving them the space and freedom to discover, play, explore and learn within a natural, outdoor setting.

Forest School has and is now being used with children of all ages; both mainstream and with children with specific emotional and behavioural needs, with amazing results. Children that are known not to concentrate well in class are coming to Forest School and excelling in practical, hands-on tasks which engage them. Improved social skills, greater peer interaction, stronger relationships and better problem-solving abilities are all benefits attributed to Forest School attendees. No child can fail at Forest School; as they all manage to take something positive from the experience.

Forest School is holistic learning through play and exploration. Children learn about the natural environment, how to handle risks and to use their own initiative to solve problems and cooperate with others. Forest School sessions provide increasingly diverse opportunities for children to benefit from a supportive curriculum that can help them build positive values and attitudes about themselves, about learning and the environment in which they live. Children are invited to participate in challenging and achievable tasks that build their confidence, skills and independence. They are given the time to thoroughly explore their thoughts, feelings and relationships.

Our Forest School sessions take place at Alexandra Palace and on our school premises (Eco Hub). Forest school will run all through the academic year to allow the children to experience all weathers and sessions.

Each class will be split into two groups of 15 with a morning/ afternoon session taking place over six weeks/ half a term. There will be a set day 1x weekly session for the designated children to participate in forest school. All the children will have equal access and experience.



Signed; <i>Sharon Hedson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## **2. Benefits of Forest School**

Forest school offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves. For example, older pupils will be taught how to be safe around fires, to create a fire pit, to start a fire, keep it alight and how to extinguish it.

Pupils have an opportunity to build relationships and experience teamwork. Children who are often less confident in classroom-based activities or sporting events have an opportunity to succeed in a different environment. Forest School activities can be pupil or teacher led. There are opportunities for quiet reflective time where pupils can enjoy the sensory experiences of the outdoors and where getting mud and dirt on hands and faces is all part of the experience.

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. The Forest School programme aims to develop the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the pupil. The holistic development and engagement of the pupil is paramount. Further cross-curricular learning exists when the opportunity to use tools such as small saws, hand drills, axes and knives is given.

This also provides the chance to participate in building shelters and dens, creating 3-dimensional art and gain an understanding of how people lived many years ago. Pupils are able to experience time outside in a safe environment. We aim to foster a relationship with nature in order to develop long-term, environmentally sustainable attitudes and practices for staff, pupils and their families.

## **3. The Wild Passport**

We have also invested in the wild passport and it is a five year outdoor learning curriculum. The wild passport is a skill, knowledge and competency based outdoor learning curriculum and progression monitoring system. Providing a five-year curriculum, the wild passport have 125 learning outcomes split over five separate competencies to take learners from the very foundations of woodland skills right through to an advanced level. Designed as a stand alone programme or to support existing outdoor learning approaches such as Forest School, the wild passport provides a framework for evidencing learner progression and achievements, providing justification for the provision of outdoor learning opportunities.

## **4. Forest School Activities**

The possible activities that could take place at forest school to encourage an awareness of outdoor learning in a natural environment is through learning new skills that complement what we learn at school, and making sure we are having fun while doing so. Collecting, identifying and sorting natural materials such as leaves, trees and learning about the natural world and team games are a consistent feature all year round. The list below acts as a guide to the wide range of learning experiences offered throughout the year.

### **AUTUMN:**

Collecting and counting natural objects, conkers, leaves etc.  
Investigating signs of autumn  
Printing in mud using natural materials, making mud pies, exploring mud and puddles.  
Discovering minibeasts and learning about their habitat.  
Observing migratory birds  
Climbing, digging, drilling and using mallets.  
Making collages using natural objects.  
Drilling conkers and having conkers competitions.  
Making/sorting collections by criteria.

### **WINTER:**

Making bug hotels, bird feeders and dens.  
Investigating signs of winter  
Exploring winter colours and homes for insects.  
Listening to winter sounds and looking at hibernation.  
Making bird feeders, leaf mandalas and mud spirit faces.  
Tree climbing and rope tying.  
Stick weaving and weaving spider webs with wool.  
Looking at why ice freezes and melts.

### **SPRING:**

Looking at spring plants and colours.  
Investigating signs of spring  
Making birds nest and instruments using natural materials.  
Making dreamcatchers and creating stick sculptures.  
Creating petal perfume.  
Storytelling and role play with natural objects.  
Celebrating living things e.g. bees, insects and how things grow.

Hunts for mini beasts and texture hunts.  
Tree investigations  
Building shelters.

### **SUMMER:**

Using tools.  
Modelling using clay and natural resources.  
Investigating signs of summer  
Collecting, identifying and sorting natural materials such as leaves  
Making stick man, potions and petal perfume.  
Elder stick candles.  
Sound hunts and scent trails.  
Climbing trees and making dens.  
Making hammocks and rope bridges.

## **5. Clothing Requirements**

This is weather dependent but as a rule parents are asked to provide their children with a bag of Forest School clothes which are old; as they are likely to become grubby and muddy.

At all times of the year the children should have their legs and arms covered to protect them from scratches, insect bites and ticks (trousers and long-sleeved tops). They should also wear wellies if needed. In winter (or wet weather) we have a few waterproof dungarees and lightweight jackets; children can use but it is often best for children to wear their own where possible. Children will need to have their own warm jumper and/or fleece to wear underneath. They will also need hats and gloves.

In summer they will need a sunhat and sunscreen. It is only in very windy weather or if a thunderstorm is forecast that Forest School is cancelled. 'There is no such thing as bad weather, only inadequate clothing'.

Signed; <i>Sharon Hudson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## **6. Toileting**

There are no accessible toilets on the Alexandra Park Palace site, therefore children will be encouraged to use the toilet before the beginning of a session, firstly to avoid too many trips away from the group during the session and to avoid having to take off

all their waterproofs. Should a child need to go to the toilet during a session, this will be in a designated area of the woods. Children are encouraged to alert a staff member when they need the toilet and they will be supervised to ensure they know how to do a “wild wee” and others are not in the vicinity to ensure privacy. Once a child has used the toilet, they will wash their hands after every trip and also use hand sanitisers. If necessary, a member of staff will escort the child back to school.

If on the rare occasion a child should have a toileting accident during forest school, then the adult (assistant) will inform the Forest School Leader, who would offer further advise e.g change clothes in a designated area.

The Forest School leader will ensure these guidelines are followed and all concerns must be reported to the leader who will decide on the best form of action.

Signed; <i>Sharon Hedson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## 7. Equipment

As part of our protocol we take the following precautionary measures and equipment on our forest school sessions: -

- Risk assessment and Incident record book
- Children’s individual medical requirements (inhalers etc)
- First aid kit (including plasters, water, saline pack, cold pack, bandages)
- First aid booklet
- Fleece blanket or Heat blanket
- Emergency shelter
- Hand gel
- Protective gloves
- Carrier bags

Other equipment are Trowels and forks, Magnifying glasses, Ropes, Buckets, String, Bow-saw, Peelers, Penknives, Tarpaulins, Identification charts/books, Specimen jars, Clipboards, Pencil, Scissors, Fire pit (used very rarely), water, Wind break and spade (day sessions). This is also subject to the experiences on offer in a particular forest school session.

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## 8. Fire Policy

Lighting fire is a desirable part of the forest school experience. This only takes place on the school premises (Eco Hub) as fire is not permitted on the grounds of Alexandra Palace. This policy sets out the guidelines to follow to ensure safer practise when undertaking fire activities with children.

Fires will only be lit by a Forest School Leader following the safety procedure below as well as when the children are ready in every way; emotionally and physically for this experience. Keeping safe rules and expectations around a fire should be discussed with children in advance of this activity. It is also expected that an opportunity will be created to enable children to share their thoughts about fire and rehearse some of the strategies and expectations in advance of such and activity.

Considerations before deciding to have a fire are as follows;

**Wind direction:** No combustible materials nearby/overhanging branches.

**Soil type:** ensure the soils is not too peaty.

**Safety -clothing and hair:** No hair/Jewellery dangling – hair tied back. No gloves should be worn when placing materials on the fire.

**Safe Sitting:** Seating should be positioned 2m away from fire bowl. Allowing gaps between seating arrangements to ensure there are escape routes. Invite children into the inner circle as appropriate. Ensure the area between the seating area and fire pit is free from debris and trip hazards. Children will be taught they must never cross the inside ring. They should be taught to move by stepping over the seating log and walking outside the seating area. Seating in the line of smoke will be avoided wherever possible. Children will be encouraged to turn their heads or move location if the smoke is coming in their direction.

**Safe Management:** Fires will be lit by the forest school leader, only when they are confident the group is able to carry out instructions safely. Fires will be lit using a fire steel, matches and firelighters can be used but will be stored safely away in a fireproof box. No flammable liquids will be used to light or accelerate fires.

The fire should never be left unattended. A bucket or watering can of water should be made available in case of an emergency/burn/scald, as well as a fire blanket for extinguishing flames. The fire will be lit in a designated area used only for this purpose.

The area will be cleared of dried leaves, wood or porous rocks which might explode if heated. A fire bowl/pit will be used to prevent the spread of fire on the school site.

**Safe Extinguishing:** Spread out the embers of the fire, pour on water gently from the bucket or watering can. Using the back of the hand, check for heat, and then apply further water if necessary. Emergency School Fire Action plans will be followed in an emergency.

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## 9. Food Hygiene

Food and drink preparation and sitting together whilst eating and drinking are important parts of Forest School. This procedure has been devised using advice in Preventing Food Poisoning - Good Hygiene at Home published by the Food Standards Agency and 10 Ways to Prevent Food Poisoning on the NHS Choices website. The FSL will ensure that all staff, volunteers and participants follow the safety rules.

When cooking or using food in the outdoors, we will try and maintain the highest quality food hygiene standards possible. Every day people get ill from the food they eat. Bacteria, viruses and parasites found in food can cause food poisoning. Often, there is no way of telling if food is contaminated because it might not look, taste or smell any different from normal. Food poisoning can lead to gastroenteritis and dehydration, or potentially even more serious health problems such as blood poisoning (septicemia) and kidney failure. Food poisoning can be serious in children, because they have a weaker immune system. Therefore, food hygiene regulations need to be followed at all times.

Procedure Food safety and hygiene will be upheld by following the guidelines below;

- This will include washing hands with soap and warm water or using hand gel before handling any food.
- Tuck in long hair and tie, roll up or fasten loose clothing to avoid any potential accidents when cooking and handling hot food.
- Preventing contamination of food by storing it appropriately at the correct temperatures
- When involved in food and drink preparation you should: Wash hands before, during and after cooking.
- Do not, handle food if ill with stomach problems, such as diarrhoea or vomiting.
- Cover sores and cuts with a waterproof dressing.
- Avoid handling food where possible, and instead use spoons, tongs or other suitable implements
- When cooking with a stick, use green wood and remove bark before cooking using a knife and scraping action
- Cook food to the right temperature.
- Split open food and check it is cooked completely before consumption

- Food will be stored in appropriate air tight containers until required.
- Parents/carers/school will be asked to divulge any food allergies on the permission slips. This information will be used to plan what food and drink to provide during sessions, ensuring that the food and drink provided is suitable for all.
- There will be no sharing of food between children or adults and no using of the same cutlery or cups while eating and drinking.
- Raw meat will not be used, for example vegetarian sausages will be cooked instead of meat ones.
- Keep food that is waiting to be cooked separate from food that is ready to be eaten.
- Use separate chopping boards for preparing different foods, especially raw and ready-to-eat food.
- Prepare food on a suitable surface, e.g., chopping board, cup, saucepan and not on the ground.
- Cooked food should not be reheated more than once.
- Store food in clean plastic containers with non-leaking lids
- Any unused water will be poured away before leaving the site. All water carriers will be washed thoroughly at the end of the day
- Any uneaten or leftover food products and packaging will be removed from the sit to avoid attracting vermin.
- It will be the responsibility of the Forest School leader to ensure that all the utensils and hand towels are cleaned and stored appropriately.

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## 10. Forest School Equipment

### Kit Bag for Emergency

On every visit the forest school leader will take a kit bag with them as well as the resources they need for the activities planned for the day. The kit bag is stored in the foundation room on a clearly labelled peg. It should always be taken on every forest school session and returned after each visit.

The essential items that must be present in the kit bag are;

- First aid kit
- Emergency procedures
- Medical information for children with care plans
- Emergency whistle
- Emergency blanket
- Risk assessment (should indicate the additional needs of specific children and staff)

- Accident forms
- Writing tools (pen/ pencil)
- Mobile phone
- Spare clothes
- Plastic bag
- Register
- Clean water (if used for drinking- provide dated sticker on the bottle)
- Medication for individual children (should be stored in their individual transparent wallet clearly labelled with doses, child's name and parents' consent form included. Staff must be trained in administering medication)
- Medication for specific adults assisting with the session (if required)
- Spare Epi-pen.

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## 11. First Aid Kit

First aid kits are stored in the school office and are signed out for every forest school session. A specific first aid kit should be used alongside the kit bag as well as the standard contents as specified by the school, the first aid kit should include;

- Eye wash (sterile water)
- Bandages (Triangular and regular)
- Gloves
- Sterile scissors in a wrapper
- Emergency foil blanket

All products need replacing once opened. Please note there is no antiseptic cream, steri wipes and antihistamine (unless prescribed) to be used, due to allergies. The first aid kit will be continuously re-filled as needed and items checked regularly to ensure that there are no damaged or expired resources.

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## 12. Forest School Code of Conduct

**Throughout all Forest School activities, explicit links are made with the Keeping Safe element of the PSHE curriculum.**

### **Boundaries**

Each forest school session begins with the reinforcing of the physical boundaries of the session in our welcome circle. The boundaries of the areas the children are permitted to access, should be made clear and easily identifiable. Children will have had an introduction to boundaries during previous forest school sessions and its purpose in keeping them safe. Some sessions will have games that will allow children to practise both making and staying within defined boundaries.

Once the process of marking the boundaries is established over time, children are independently given markers (flags) to locate on the parameter of the boundary area themselves. If we are unable to see all the children, we (adults) shout '1, 2, 3, where are you?' The child then reply '1, 2, 3, I'm here.' This call and response, will have been introduced through a game and practised many times during the initial forest sessions.

### **Picking up and playing with sticks**

Children will be allowed to carry sticks shorter than their arm's length. They will be reminded of safety issues which might arise due to their proximity to other children when playing with sticks. Longer sticks can be dragged or carried with a child at both ends. Sticks must not be thrown, nor should children be allowed to pull them from living trees.

### **Picking up and playing with stones**

Children often enjoy creating games and creative activities with stones. Stones may not be thrown. They may be dropped but thought must be given to the environment impact of this action (i.e. where the stone is dropped or taken from. What is the impact on the biodiversity of that particular area)

### **Tree climbing**

When risk assessments are carried out, areas below climbing trees must be checked for sharp objects and the tree checked for loose and rotten branches. Children are not to climb higher than an adult's arm length (raising their hands) or chest height. Unsafe or tempting trees can be marked with hazard tape.

### **Rope and string use**

Children will be encouraged to connect and transport materials using rope/string, but prevented from tying up other children or themselves. If a child wants to, try and build using string (e.g. a rope swing) use the opportunity to model appropriate knot tying. All string and rope must be collected at the end of the session.

In carrying and transporting materials, the children should be encouraged to roll, lift, drag and pull materials either by hand or using ropes. The safe way to lift; by bending your knees and keeping your back straight, should be modelled by all adults. Heavier objects should be rolled, dragged or carried by more people.

### **Pond area**

When children visit the pond area, the forest school leader will always ensure two children at a time undertake this activity to avoid pushing and slipping. An adult should always be present, standing between the two children and the edge of the pond. Children will not be allowed in the pond at any time.

### **Lighting a fire (please refer to fire policy above)**

Adults and children are expected to follow the clear guidance in the fire policy. Children are required to stay within the parameters set and only enter the inner circle of the fire under adult invitation and supervision. There should be no running past the fire circle. No items must be carried or placed within the circle unless by an adult.

### **Eating and drinking**

Children are not to lick or pick anything found during the sessions. Children must be reminded not to put their hands in their mouths or noses. When having drinks and snacks, children will use wipes or wash their hands before consumption. Eating and drinking times will be scheduled by the leader and will take place at set times. All rubbish will be disposed of correctly or taken back to school in a bag, no rubbish is to be left in the area being used.

### **Leaving the site**

After each session the area we have used will be left as we found it and any evidence of our presence removed to protect the natural environment. Children's work will be taken back to school or dismantled if making shelters. No changes will be made to any area that could disrupt natural habitats or wildlife. All staff and volunteers will be briefed beforehand by the leader. No area should be over used and children should be informed of why this is important.

### **Toileting**

Children will be encouraged to use the toilet before leaving the school building. A designated area will be set aside if they need to go use the toilet while in the woods. Children will tell a member of staff if they need to use the toilet and they will be supervised to ensure they know how to do a wild wee and others are not in the vicinity, to create privacy. This only takes place if the child cannot wait until we return to school. If necessary, a member of staff will escort the child back to school.

### **Digging**

Digging and exploring the woodland floor will be planned ahead and a suitable place will be selected by the forest school leader so that the natural environment is not

disturbed or destroyed. The leader will check that digging in that area does not cause damage to habitats.

### **Other activities**

Some activities will require picking flowers, leaves or herbs. The forest school lead will talk to children about dangerous plants beforehand. The significance of looking after living things and the environment they live in will be explained and encouraged at all times.

### **General Forest School considerations**

- Look after your Forest School and leave the site as you found it
- Do not pick anything growing (unless permitted by an adult – e.g. leaves in autumn)  
Do not put your fingers, or anything else, in your mouth
- Stay within the boundaries marked
- Look above, below and around for hazards.
- Come to the base camp when asked.
- Call an adult if you find anything dangerous (eg glass, faeces) – ask a friend to stand beside it so we don't forget where it is.

Signed; <i>Sharon Hedson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## **13. Woodland management plan**

All woodland work, including thinning, replanting preparation, replanting, hedge laying and creation of habitat mounds/ piles is carried out by the Alexandra Park Woodland management team. The fauna and flora and the wildlife are carefully managed in the environment.

The vision of the plan is to maintain and improve the woodland in terms of biodiversity and landscape. Improve the wooded areas through good practice and improving access to facilitate essential activities and increase the area of woodland under active management. Ensuring that the site is maintained as a diverse and healthy woodland habitat in perpetuity.

Further information can be found on

<https://www.alexandrapalace.com/blog/alexandra-park-preserving-incredible-oasis-everyone/>

Alexandra Park and Palace Charitable Trust is responsible for the conservation, maintenance and restoration of the Park and also provides a year-round programme of educational and leisure activities.

The school maintains a longstanding relationship with the Alexandra Park management team. Any concerns witnessed or experienced is reported to the management team (Mark Evison - 020 8365 2121 and dialling ext. 212) i.e. broken branches, excessive litter in a particular area, foreign objects such as syringes, moths, etc, or any issues that impacts the safety and wellbeing of others on the grounds of Alexandra Park and Palace.

## 14. Environmental Impact – 3-year management plan

Feature	Location	Current situation	Target Situation	How can this be achieved	How will it be monitored?	Who will monitor this	Time scale
Pathways and Clearings (including removal of nettles and brambles).	Alexandra Park and Palace woodland.	Overgrown. limited access or spaces in which to conduct forest school activities.	Open clearings and pathways. Spaces in which to conduct forest school activities	Clearing of the ground and field layer. The grounds used are closely monitored by Alexandra Palace Park management team and Haringey council.  Use of the area by children will also reduce growth.	By Forest school leaders using the area, Alexandra Palace Park management team and Haringey council	Initially in the first month and then continued for the length of Forest School use	3 years
Trees around wooded areas.	Alexandra Palace woodland	Some of the wood are mature and over 200years old.	Planting of more trees in the area.  Alexandra Palace Park management team and Haringey Council are aware of the flora and fauna needs of the park area and plan accordingly to this effect, this includes the removal of dead trees.	Planting of more trees in the area, when trees are removed	Monitored by Forest School Leader, Alexandra Palace Park management team Haringey Council Tree Safety	Forest School Leader and Alexandra Palace Park management team and Haringey council.	3 years
Dead Wood, in trees and on ground	Alexandra Palace woodland	Limited deadwood. Trees are safe. New trees not producing much deadwood.	Plentiful deadwood for use during activities and as a habitat for bugs/insects.	Find a supply of wood for construction activities. Create deadwood habitats. Find a regular source for fire wood.	Monitored by Forest school leader Alexandra Palace Park management team Haringey Council	Monitored and maintained by Forest School Leader	3 years
Litter on pathways and site	Alexandra Palace woodland	Scattered pieces of litter and debris which could be harmful to animals and users of the environment.	Clear and litter free.	When pieces of litter is found, they are dispose in local bins only when it is safe to do so. This can also be taken back to the school site and dispose of appropriately. Hazardous litter (Syringes, potential drugs, etc) is managed by the Alexandra Palace Park management team and Haringey Council	Visually monitored by a forest school leader. Reported to Alexandra Palace Park management team.	Forest school leader and Haringey council.	Every half term at forest school.



Animal faeces	Alexandra Palace woodland	Dog faeces on pavement and pathways	Clear and free from faeces.	Continuous campaign and lobby to Haringey council with regards to signage and clear guidance and expectation for dog walkers	Visually monitored by the forest school leader on their site visit prior to any session and reported to Alexandra Palace Park management team if required.	Forest school leader	Every half term.
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## 15. Ecological Impact

This is an area of great biodiversity and we teach our children to respect the flora and fauna. Inevitably our particular site does suffer from a high level of erosion due to weekly use but we have agreed with the Alexandra Park and Palace Woodland management team, that it is better to degrade one area than to spread ourselves into other areas. When the older children are working in adult-led groups on environmental projects they may walk further afield but they are taught to take a responsible attitude towards the plants and wildlife such as maintaining the habitat of the numerous insects and other animals. Children are not allowed to pick leaves or break branches. Branches that have naturally fallen to the grounds are used if required for an activity.

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## 16. Forest School Emergency Procedures

The Forest school emergency procedures should be implemented in the case of an emergency during a Forest School session. Every procedure should be carried out by the designated Forest School leader, unless they are not in a position to do so. In such a case the designated assistant will follow the procedure required. Any persons who witness or are involved in an emergency should immediately inform the Forest School leader or their assistant.

### FIRST AID

- Any illness or injury should be treated by the qualified first aider.
- The attending assistant should gather children away from the casualty but remain nearby instructing the children to remain seated
- Other adult helpers will stay with the children.
- The teaching assistant will support the Forest School leader if necessary.

- Notify the school first and if necessary ask for further help (including emergency services)
- The head teacher or deputy will be notified and a decision will be made with regards to contacting the parent/carer.
- Have medical details available from the kit bag and complete the accident/incident form.
- A follow up conversation by the forest school lead, may be held with parents once everyone has returned to the school premises.

**MISSING CHILD**

- As soon as you notice a child missing, use the ' 1,2,3 where are you' to encourage the missing child response which would help to identify their location. (This must have been previously practised with the children)
- Immediately search of the area you have been using.
- Immediately notify the school.
- The head teacher or deputy will be notified and a decision will be made with regards to contacting the parent/carer.
- The school will give instructions about the next steps to follow.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS**

**Emergency Services 999 or 121**

**Campsbourne School 0208 340 2064**

- The purpose of the emergency procedures is to ensure that safety and wellbeing is paramount at all times and that all emergencies are dealt with calmly and quickly in accordance with the school's policy for the best outcomes.
- In the event of an emergency the forest school leader must carry out each step of the emergency procedure. In the event that the leader is unable to, the attending assistant is to ensure the steps are followed with accuracy.
- All adults attending the forest school sessions must be briefed on the emergency procedures before the initial session and regularly thereafter.
- A copy of the emergency procedures must be agreed and shared with the headteacher and SLT, so that everyone is prepared should an emergency arise or need to provide assistance/advice over the phone.

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**17. Staff Training**

The School's Forest School Leader and Nursery Forest School teacher is Fiona Beaumont. Lead for Reception, Key Stage 1 and 2 is Sharon Hodson. Fiona Beaumont and Sharon Hodson have Level 3 Forest School accredited qualifications. Both have undertaken specialist Outdoor First Aid Training. Additional staff members and parents will be briefed on health and safety measures before assisting with forest school sessions. Sessions will be immediately cancelled if a forest school leader is unable to attend.

## DBS

All staff have been checked against the Disclosure and Barring Service to ascertain if they have any criminal convictions that make them unsuitable to work with children. All adult volunteers will have to complete a volunteer form before working with a school. It is not compulsory for parents/volunteers to have a DBS form, as they will always be accompanied and overseen by the Forest School Leader and their assistant/s. There will be restrictions to the level of support volunteers can give during activities such as using tools, building fires, etc. Volunteers will not be supporting children with personal care such as toileting and dressing.

Volunteers will be briefed about Forest School expectations, ethos, responsibilities and health requirements of children before each session.

Signed; <i>Sharon Hodson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## 18. Health and Safety

The initial sessions of our Forest School programme will establish both physical and behavioural boundaries. Instructions to pupils will be age appropriate. Activities undertaken will be suitable for the age and ability of the group.

For Nursery classes, the staff to pupil ratio will be a maximum of 1:6, other classes will have a staff to pupil ratio of 2:15. The adults in this ratio will consist of a Forest School leader and classroom assistant or parent volunteer. Adults who support children on a 1:1 basis are additional. The FSL will make a Risk Assessment prior to each session that ensures adequate adult to child ratios when taking into account the level of needs in the group as well as any adverse conditions and also reflecting the difficulty of the planned activities.

See ([educational visits guidance.pdf](#)) P.13. Planning Visits.

All classes will be run by a staff member who has received a Level 3 Accreditation from the Forest Schools Association and will be supported by class teachers and/ or assistants as applicable.

All Forest School activities are supported by a full Risk Assessment which is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, subject to the specific needs of the group and annually reviewed.

Forest School activities will be led by a member of staff who holds an up-to-date first aid qualification which includes paediatric first aid. 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.

Pupils will be required to wear suitable clothing when attending Forest School. This will ensure that they can fully participate in all the activities with ease. Suitable clothing may include waterproof trousers and coats, gloves, woolly hats, scarves and wellington boots; alternatively, sunhats, sunglasses, trainers and loose long trousers may be more suitable during summer.

Forest School rules are explained to the children in a way which is age appropriate and easy for them to remember. For example, “No picking, no licking!” song, watch out for “slipping and tripping” chant.

All children are reminded to stay within the boundaries marked, to look above and below for hazards (mind the hidden rabbit holes, tripping roots and creeping plants).

Call an adult if you find anything dangerous or strange – ask a friend to stand beside it so we don’t forget where it is and do not touch it. We also have a special Forest School (FS) song which when sung, the children know it is time to return to “base camp” immediately.

### **Death or Serious Incident procedure:**

In the event of a serious incident, the following procedure will be followed;

1. Immediately follow first aid procedures.
2. The teaching assistant must gather children away from the casualty but remain nearby so the group stays together. The teaching assistant will instruct the children to remain seated, and will be available to support the Forest School Leader/First Aider if necessary. The other adults will stay with the children.
3. Immediately notify school.
4. School to notify emergency services (including police).
5. The police will notify parents/guardians/next of kin.
6. Police to advise on follow-up.
7. Headteacher to report to LA and Ofsted and any other party as required by law.

Signed; <i>Sharon Hudson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## **19.Safeguarding Policy**

Every staff member has a responsibility in relation to child protection. We are committed to: taking all reasonable measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of each child and young

person (pupil) in our care. The practice of safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children and young people protecting each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil is firmly grounded in our policies and procedures at school.

**Our aims:**

- To raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting of concerns and cases.
- To provide guidance on recognising and dealing with suspected child abuse.
- To provide a framework for inter-agency communication and effective liaison.
- To ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
- To ensure that safe recruitment procedures are operated.
- To design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations.
- To contribute to the operation of appropriate health and safety procedures.
- To have regard to and be consistent with relevant statutory and regulatory requirements and guidance.

In addition, adults working within Forest School need to appreciate that when children feel comfortable and content, when their instinct to trust and risk take is encouraged, they may be moved to disclose information which they might have otherwise kept to themselves. Any volunteer, or member of staff, who finds that a child is telling them something that concerns them should follow the course of action set out below;

**Steps:**

1. Listen to the pupil but ask NO leading questions. Allow the child to lead the discussion but do not press for details.
2. Keep calm and offer reassurance. Accept what the child says without challenge.
3. Make NO promises. You cannot ‘keep a secret’. You should make it understood that there are limits to confidentiality at the start of the disclosure.
4. Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
5. Keep an accurate, written record of the conversation (verbatim), including the date, the time, the place the conversation occurred, and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. Keep the record secure and hand it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and record on the data base system ‘My Concern’.

For full Campsbourne School Safeguarding Policy see: <https://campsbourne.haringey.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Safeguarding-Child-Protection-Policy-Autumn-2023.pdf>

Signed; <i>Sharon Hodson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## **20. Equal Opportunities**

### **Special Educational Needs**

All pupils will be given the opportunity to participate in all Forest School Activities regardless of age, need, ability or gender. The Forest School programme promotes children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging pupils to develop a sense of autonomy and independence. All pupils will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured.

Forest School activities and the use of Forest School equipment will offer pupils the opportunity to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Pupils with exceptional needs will be admitted to the Forest School programme after consultation between parents, SLT and Forest school practitioners. The Forest School programme will recognise the wide range of special needs of pupils and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs through adapting and differentiating activities to make it accessible to all.

All pupils should be adequately dressed to ensure that they are able to take part in all Forest School activities. A list of required clothing will be sent to parents/carers. A small amount of spare clothing will be available if additional layers or replacements are needed. Appropriately sized personal protective equipment e.g. work gloves, hard hats, and fire mitts will be available for all participants.

### **Behaviour management**

Pupils and Adults are expected to follow the rules of the school and forest school specific rules when undertaking activities.

The expected behaviour is as follows;

- Engage and participate in forest school activities is encouraged.
- Listen when the adults (FSL and other adults) supporting them is relaying information to them.
- Take turns when talking with your peers, listen to what they have to say.
- Keep to the Forest School boundaries agreed with the FSL.
- Be aware and keep themselves safe by looking around you and taking care.
- Keep their friends safe too by using Forest School language – kind words always and be polite.
- Be patient with each other, as everyone learns at different rates.
- All staff are trained in de-escalation strategies and challenging behaviour will be addressed in line with the school's behaviour policy, through the information provided on the risk assessment and the individual pupil's PLP.
- Anti-bullying - we find any form of bullying unacceptable whether between child and child; child and adult and adult and adult.

Signed; <i>Sharon Hedson</i> and Fiona Beaumont	Date; 09.02.24	Review date; 09.02.25
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## 21. Forest School Routine – Early Years and KS1

Daily site risk assessment is undertaken by the FSL to check for litter, glass, animal faeces and other hazardous items. Such items will be collected (using disposable gloves where necessary) and removed. This includes checking the route to the wood. Trees are checked for any broken or dead branches which might fall and pathways are trimmed back (brambles and nettles) where appropriate. Weather conditions are checked. If it is very windy or a thunderstorm is forecast then the session will be cancelled.

### Session Outline

Children are registered in school and the number present noted. Children change into 'Forest School clothes' brought from home. We encourage children to dress independently. In winter they will be provided with a pair of waterproof dungarees (or trousers) and a thin waterproof jacket which is also provided where necessary.

Children are expected to have their own wellies and to wear these throughout the year. However, we do have spare wellies available if necessary. In summer they wear long sleeved tops and trousers. We require a ratio of 2 adults to 15 children and also rely on parent helpers for additional support in our sessions.

Generally, the FSL will lead the party, with another member of staff at the rear. Children are expected to walk sensibly to the site, lining up side by side. An adult will check the roads one will stand in the middle of the road with a member of staff/ volunteer on both sides of the road checking the children safely crossing the road. Once we have entered the woodland area we gather round, take the register, talk about expectations, activities for the day and the potential dangers around us e.g. dogs.

Once we have reached the designated area of the woodland the children are expected to be to listen to the FSL and all the adults supporting them at all times and to each other during welcoming activities (usually an activity which involves them using their senses). Children are encouraged to take turns when talking, but are not forced if they do not wish to participate. If there is an adult-led activity then children will generally work individually or in groups with the FSL, although this may be delegated to another adult.

Other adults are available to support the remaining children, facilitating their play without directing it. In the middle of the session the children are called for a snack. They are wash their hands and or use wipes before consuming any food. We congregate in a circle with a drink and snack. At the end of each session the children are called and the children return to the base camp for a closing talk. The register is taken, before we walk back to school.

## **22.Forest School Routine – KS2**

See procedures outlined above for risk assessments and arrangements for walking to and from the site (22) This also applies to the general rules and expectations in point 22.

### **Session Outline**

KS2 children use the woods as a resource for environmental education and as such tend to use a wider area, under supervision and in groups. Sessions usually include a range of activities in the morning, eg tree identification, food webs, mapping – often inspired by The Woodland Trust Green Tree Award scheme or linked to class topics. Weather permitting, the children bring a snack, hands are washed or anti-bacterial gel is provided by staff before they eat. Afterwards there is usually the opportunity for some ‘free play’. Toileting procedures are the same as for KS1. A spade will also be available if a fire is to be lit on the school premises (Eco Hub) The portable fire-pit is used and the fire risk assessment and procedures are followed.

## **23.Role Specifications - Forest School Lead (FSL)**

The forest school leader’s responsibility includes;

- To ensure the safety of children and adults as they travel to and from the site – this includes ensuring the safety of children and adults whilst at the site.
- To provide clear guidance and expectations to children, adults and staff.
- To carry out a safety check of the site prior to visiting.
- To assess the site at the start of each term (at least).
- To carry out a basic check before each session.
- To maintain records and update the manual.
- Support staff to ensure the safety of children and adults as they travel to and from the site.
- To join in children’s activities.
- To ask open ended questions and follow their lead rather than directing them to activities/telling them what to do.
- Provide observations and/or take photographs (on school camera).
- To enforce the non-use of mobile phones for photographs (except at the discretion of the FSL).
- To supervise parent helpers/ volunteers, who assist with carrying resources to and from the site.
- To support parent volunteers to join in children’s activities by modelling open ended questions and follow children’s lead rather than directing them to activities/telling them what to do.

## **24.Risk assessments**

**Safe use of tools – all tools are used under adult supervision.**



As a general rule;

- Keep tools in good, clean order.
- Check tools are safe to use before the start of each session.
- Carry out tool maintenance (cleaning and oiling) once a week.
- Do not use tools with damaged blades or handles or with loose bolts or fixings.
- When transporting tools do not carry more than can be held securely.
- A blunt blade is more dangerous than a sharp one.
- Count tools in and out.



**Bow Saws** – use for cutting wood with a diameter greater than a 2 pence piece. Wear a glove on the non-sawing (helping) hand, which is not on the tool. Use the saw to the side of you and not in front. Keep your non sawing hand away from the blade when sawing. Saw with easy relaxed strokes using the full length of the blade. Let the blade do the work – don't force it, especially if it sticks.

Carry with the frame at your side, with the blade facing down. Keep the blade covered when not in use and especially when transporting. Ensure the item to be cut is firmly held.

When using children bow saws, the FSL and child are to kneel on floor with the FSL on one side of saw and the child on the other, both in the 'respect position'. The FSL is to guide the saw and the child follows.



**Billhooks** – are used for cleaving wood. Never wear a glove on the hand holding the tool - it makes the handle hard to grip safely. Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work. Stop if anyone comes too close. Hold billhook away from your body and cut away from yourself. For safety reasons, stop if you get tired.



**Loppers** – are used for cutting wood with a diameter smaller than a 2 pence piece. Always carry with blades closed (and locked if applicable). When not in use leave with blades closed Do not exceed the cutting capacity of the tool. Use it away from your body and keep your hand not holding the tool away from blades. Children only use it when sitting or kneeling under adult supervision.



**Knives** – are used to whittle small sticks, peel bark and cut string. Never wear a glove on the hand holding the tool - it makes the handle hard to grip safely. Wear a safety glove on your other helper hand. Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work. Stop if anyone comes too close. Hold the knife away from your body and cut away from yourself.



**Small knives** – are used to peel bark. Rest the wood you are peeling on the ground or on a bench and not on your leg. Hold the knife away from your body and peel away from yourself towards the ground. Keep the hand not holding the tool away from the sharp end of the knife. Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work. Children only use when sitting or kneeling – remind them not to move around when using knives.

### Forest School site risk assessment.

Hazard	Risk	Safety Measures	The outcome following safety measures	Who is responsible?
Trip Hazards Uneven floor, muddy ground or wet and icy ground.	Medium	verbal/visual instruction walk carefully, look around, wear appropriate footwear and mark off areas if necessary, remove trip hazards on pre-visit. Site check if possible.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Bramble, thorny plants, stinging nettles.	Medium	Show children the location of any brambles or stinging nettles and explain the implications of contact with it and ask children to avoid them.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Low branches	Medium	Point out the location of low branches if dead try to remove yourself. If this is not possible, avoid that area and report to the Alexandra Park team.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults
Insect bites and stings	Medium	Verbal/visual warning not to approach or try to catch bees or wasps, monitor sites for nest activity, check anyone with severe allergies has their epi-pen and knows how to or can be supported to use it or administered.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.

Nuts, hazel, acorns, horse chestnut.	Low	Be aware of children with severe allergies to nuts, hazel, acorns and horse chestnut. Ensure their health plan is read and the relevant medication is available and in date.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults
Fruit/Berries and fungi	Medium	Verbal/Visual warning that some berries and fungi are poisonous and not to be eaten.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Litter, metal, glass, harmful and life threatening tools, hypodermic needles.	Medium	Remove harmful litter during pre- visit site check, point out location of any harmful litter if spotted during the activity. If the object found is harmful and life threatening, call 999 and ask for the police.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults
Contact with harmful substances	Low	Ensure hands are washed thoroughly and verbalise instructions to keep hands away from face.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Exposure to the elements rain-wind-snow	Low	Make sure children are dressed appropriately for the weather, use tarpaulins for shelter, in extreme weathers, work indoors and have alternative activities.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults
Exposure to the elements sun, high winds	Low	Work in the shade, ensure sunscreen is used in advance of visit, wear hats, make sure there is plenty of drinking water. Avoid areas with lots of trees in high winds.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults
Animal faeces	Low	Point out location during pre-visit site check. Avoid area	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Dogs	Low	verbal/visual instruction to children to stay calm, still. From the consent form, take note of children who are frightened of dogs. Encourage children to look up and away from the dog and wait for the dog to pass.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Stranger Danger	Low	Ensure all children know who their designated adult is in		Forest school lead/

		advance of the trip to Alexandra park. This should be done during the safety talk. Keep children in view at all times if they are younger and are not certain about the boundary areas of play. Ensure all adults supporting the sessions understand the risks/ action needed.		additional adults and children.
Ropes – carrying the ropes	Low	Ensure that when undertaking rope activities, it is used for the appropriate purpose. Children are not to tie any part of themselves, or others. Ropes are to be stored and kept in good conditions all the time.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Climbing trees	Medium	The rules regarding climbing trees should be explicitly explained to the children in advance of this activity (see policies above). The designated tree for climbing and the surrounding area underneath should be inspected prior to the visit as part of the pre visit checks.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Using the toilet	Low	Children are encouraged to use the toilet prior to going off school site. As part of the pre visit checks, a designated area should be identified for toilet if required urgently.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.
Cooking on a campfire	Medium	Only teach this activity when children are ready and able to comprehend the risks around fire. Children are to sit 2 metres away from the fire. Refer to fire policy and procedure.	Low	Forest school lead/ additional adults and children.

*Please note that, a more detailed and comprehensive assessment is undertaken for each forest school trip to reflect the specific areas of risk for that particular session.*

## **25. Contingency and Cancellation**

In case of extreme weather conditions, cancellation of the outside forest school session will be necessary. Where possible, the session will run in the classroom engaging the pupils in team games and other relevant activities to support their outdoor sessions.

## **26. Transport**

The site for Forest school starts from the school grounds, then and walk a short walk to Alexandra Palace. When a group is taken offsite, the children will be assigned a walking partner and an adult. They will stay with their partner throughout the session unless the leader needs to adapt. The children will hold hands with their partner or stay close to one another while walking along the street to and from the relevant site. An adult will remain beside them at all times 1:6 (Nursery) and 2:15 ratio (Reception to year 6). Permissions will be requested from parents and carers and a relevant risk assessment undertaken of the site and boundaries prior to any off site visit.

Crossing roads will only be done when it is safe to do so. Before crossing the FSL will always make sure the group is ready. The FSL leader will instruct where to stop and wait. The Forest School leader and support staff will stand in the road and on both sides of the pavement to ensure safe crossing.

## **26. Insurance Requirements**

All information regarding insurance can be obtained from the Head teacher or school office upon request. The forest school will only operate if the appropriate insurance requirements are not met.

The school has a standing agreement to use Alexandra Park and Palace, this can also be obtained from the head teacher or school office.

## **27. Parental/Carer communication and permissions**

Parents/carers will be asked to fill in a consent form before their child takes part in forest school programme. The consent form will ask for relevant medical information not already held by the school or updated information, consent to take part in all forest school activities, administration of creams and any outside emergency treatment. An introduction to forest school will be sent with the consent forms. We will report to parents periodically on observations of their child and their experiences in Forest school.

### **References**

Alexandra Palace Website <https://www.alexandrapalace.com/the-park/>

Campsbourne School Policies and Procedures <http://campsbourne.haringey.sch.uk/about-us/school-policy/policy/>

Coppice School Forest School Handbook [www.coppiceschool.com](http://www.coppiceschool.com)

Forest School Association <https://www.forestschoollassociation.org/>

WAOW training course information <https://www.wildaboutourwoods.com/forest-school-training>

## Appendix One

# Forest School parental consent and medical information form

Please complete and return this form, the information will be kept confidential.

Personal details of child:

Forename(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Surname(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact details:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read the following statement, complete and delete where appropriate and sign at the bottom.

I Mrs/Mr/Miss \_\_\_\_\_ give my consent

for my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ to take part in the Forest School at Alexandra Palace, organised by Campsbourne Primary School.

Please tick statements below to show your agreement:



**Is there anything you would like us to know?**

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