

## Risk Assessment: Harrietsham Forest School – Nature Area / Forest School

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Hazard (something with the potential to cause harm)	What could go wrong?	Who may be harmed?	Measures already in place to reduce risk	Additional measures to be put in place	Risk benefit	By whom?
<b>Uneven ground.</b>	Slips, trips and falls.  Foot down a rabbit hole.	Children & adults	All chn and adults to wear suitable footwear.  Children and adults reminded of the risk of uneven ground.	Remind the children of uneven ground.  (Children are encouraged to manage their own risks with the support of adults).	Building core strength and balance.	Forest school lead
<b>Sun.</b>	Sunburn/ heat stroke	Children & adults	Parents asked to provide sun hat, drinking water and to apply sunscreen.	Adults to monitor conditions and to ensure children do not spend prolonged time in full sun.  Shelter can be sought under trees in the area.	Talking point about nature – what humans, animals and plants need to survive.  Learning point about being safe in the sun.	Forest school lead

<b>Plants &amp; insects.</b>	<p>Insect bites &amp; stings, plant stings &amp; thorns.</p> <p>If plants are eaten, they may be toxic and can cause upset stomachs, vomiting and/or diarrhoea.</p>	Children & adults	First Aid trained adults to carry appropriate first aid kits.	<p>Parents are advised to dress children in long trousers and suitable clothing for Forest School sessions.</p> <p>Embedded Forest School rules – No pick, No lick. Adults to encourage children not to put anything into their mouths, not even their fingers, children to wash their hands upon return to school or if they touch plant known to be toxic.</p> <p>Children to be taught about the plants within Forest Schools. Children reminded what nettles &amp; thorns look like &amp; that some mini-beasts may bite. (Children are encouraged to manage their own risks with the support of adults).</p>	<p>Using our flora and fauna resource to identify plants and insects.</p> <p>Teach the children don't pick don't lick.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Snakes</b>	Adder bite	Children and adults	<p>Lead adult in group to make children aware of different species of snake and the risks.</p> <p>All staff have read and understood procedures sheet attached.</p>	<p>Children reminded not to touch snakes, to keep still if they see one, then move slowly away.</p> <p>If bitten, keep calm, keep bitten limb as still as possible, loosen clothing, call 999 for ambulance.</p> <p>(Children are encouraged to manage their own risks with the support of adults).</p>	<p>Learning to do the forest school stomp to encourage snakes to move.</p> <p>Learn to roll logs towards us to allow snakes time to move away.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Micro-organisms occurring naturally.</b>	Risk of infection.	<p>Children &amp; adults</p> <p>See specific child needs.</p>	<p>Soap and water / hand sanitiser will be available for hand washing.</p> <p>See separate plans for specific children.</p>	<p>Pupils to be reminded not to put fingers into their mouths.</p> <p>Children to wash their hands before eating and on their return to school.</p> <p>(Children are encouraged to manage their own risks with the support of adults).</p>	<p>Using our flora and fauna resource to identify plants and insects.</p> <p>Teach the children don't pick don't lick.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Public Footpaths – to and from school site to Nature area (currently 2 running through Nature Area).</b>	<p>Dogs loose and possible fouling, irresponsible owners not clearing up.</p> <p>Dangerous litter left in the area.</p> <p>Stranger Danger!</p> <p>Damage to school property.</p> <p>Children going 'offsite' and outside boundary fence.</p>	<p>Children &amp; adults.</p> <p>Damage to school property – unsafe for child use.</p>	<p>Group walks together.</p> <p>All adults wear high-vis jacket.</p> <p>Children to wear high-vis jackets.</p> <p>Named adults at front &amp; rear (NOT children).</p> <p>1:1s for chn in need.</p>	<p>Ensure all children WALK between adults.</p> <p>If dog owner approaches, adults to ask for dogs to be put on leads.</p> <p>Leading adult to thoroughly check area prior to visit to ensure safe, clean and useable.</p> <p>Mobile phone or walkie-talkie taken to Forest School with adult leading – for emergency contact with school.</p> <p>School Office / SLT aware when staff are taking chn to Forest School.</p> <p>If loose dog approaches, chn to be instructed to stand still.</p>	<p>Building confidence and resilience outside the school boundary.</p> <p>Use of the grounds to learn about nature.</p>	Forest school lead

<b>Children becoming separated from school group.</b>	Child becomes anxious / lost.	Children	<p>Children to be registered and counted on and off the school site, to ensure that no one is left behind.</p> <p>Children to stay within groups inside the Nature area and boundaries (Once installed).</p>	<p>Children taught about boundaries in the Nature Area. Then reminded each visit.</p> <p>Adults to count children once at forest school, before we leave forest school and as the children return to school. Carry a class register.</p> <p>Children not to leave Nature area unsupervised (consider gate fastenings once area no longer accessible by public).</p> <p>(Children are encouraged to manage their own risks with the support of adults).</p>	<p>Use of the grounds to learn about nature.</p> <p>Bubby up and stay together.</p> <p>Discuss with children about building our forest school community and looking out for each other.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Child approached by unknown adult</b>	A person, who is unknown to the child, approaches one of the children for unclear and potentially harmful reasons.	Children	<p>Children are reminded of stranger danger on regular basis.</p> <p>Children are in pairs, looking out for each other and are in the care of as specific watchful adult.</p>	<p>Children reminded to stay close to their adult, within the set boundaries for the session.</p> <p>Adults to spread out around the site.</p> <p>All chn and school adults in high-vis jackets.</p> <p>School adults within earshot of chn at all times.</p>	<p>Teaching the children how to be safe.</p> <p>Link this to the older years for when they are ready to walk to and from school alone.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Low hanging branches</b>	Could cause injuries: walking in to them or braking them off, or they have broken for natural reasons.	Children & adults	During the safety sweep, adults to check branches are safe.	<p>Remove any dangers branches to prevent injury.</p> <p>Chn taught to report branches which may be dangerous.</p>	Low hanging trees can provide physical challenges for the children, climbing and avoiding.	Forest school leader.
<b>Basecamp fire</b>	Burns, tripping over logs.	Children & adults	<p>Safety zone – Fire square and the seating 1.5m away.</p> <p>Use: A sturdy fire basket Dry wood and kindling Fire glove Ensure plenty of water in on standby.</p> <p>Rules: Hair tied back Scarves, toggles and lanyards tucked away Children to wait outside the seating until invited into basecamp All movement to happen outside the seating area – not between the seats and the fire square Fire safety talk before the fire is lit.</p>	<p>During the safety sweep, the fire basket and basecamp should be checked.</p> <p>First aid kit, burns kit to be taken with the chn.</p> <p>All fire equipment to be stored in a locked cupboard – out of reach of chn until being used under supervision.</p>	<p>Learning – what do we need to create a fire? Fuel, oxygen, ignition or heat.</p> <p>Teach children about fire safety – Do not play with matches, lighters or fire. Explain why.</p> <p>Embed the rules – no one enters basecamp without invitation first. No running around, near or in basecamp.</p> <p>Everyone to move around basecamp and not through basecamp.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Basecamp fire</b>	Fire could spread to the flora.	Children & adults & our forest school setting	As above	As above	As above In addition, explain what could happen to our forest school area and the life within.	Forest school lead

<b>Cooking</b>	Burns, Food poisoning, Allergies, Cuts	Children & adults	<p>As per the fire risk assessment.</p> <p>All children within the school with allergies are known to all staff.</p> <p>Ensure all medication is available and kept safe during the forest school session.</p> <p>Do not cook with meat.</p> <p>Small ratio 1:1 to start.</p>	Forest school leader to obtain food hygiene certificate before cooking with forest school.	<p>Great opportunities for child to cook and link to the curriculum including damper bread for stone age, honey pancakes for ancient Greece and many more.</p> <p>Builds confidence and teamwork.</p> <p>As above embed the basecamp rules.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Kelly kettle</b>	Scolds and burns	Children & adults	<p>Teach the children how to use the Kelly kettle safely.</p> <p>Small ratio 1:1 initially.</p> <p>When pouring, use the lip to lip method.</p> <p>Use cold water to lower the temperature of the drinks before consuming.</p>	Safety check of all equipment and teach children to use safely.	<p>Great experience, allows time to reflect at the end of a session.</p> <p>Can be used to help build relationships and our forest school community.</p> <p>Talking point about steam vs smoke.</p> <p>Talking point about the build-up of pressure and what happens.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Loose parts – tyres, guttering, crates, pots, boxes, balls, bricks,</b>	<p>Injuries may occur through moving the loose parts.</p> <p>Some gutting is long and may bump others on the head.</p> <p>Bricks are heavy if they are dropped.</p> <p>During building, children may cause the structure to collapse.</p>	Children and adults	<p>Health and safety checks regularly carried out to ensure equipment is safe and useable.</p> <p>Any unsafe equipment removed from site immediately.</p> <p>Children will be introduced to loose parts and taught how to use them and encouraged to identify possible risks and safety measures as a group.</p>	<p>During Forest School session, children identify and manage their own risk.</p> <p>Forest School Leader and other adults are on hand to monitor and support as needed.</p> <p>Close supervision and support from adults as necessary.</p>	<p>Loose part provides lots of opportunity for team building activities.</p> <p>Developing communication skills, fine and gross motor skills.</p> <p>Improving confidence but allowing for social experiences and problem solving.</p>	Forest School Lead.
<b>Pallets</b>	<p>Splinters, cuts, bumps on head, falls, dropping onto foot.</p> <p>Pallets may become damaged and nails may protrude.</p>	Children & adults	<p>Pallets to be checked as part of the safety sweep and removed or put out of use if they are damaged or unsafe, until they can be repaired or dismantled.</p>	<p>Rules and boundaries will be embedded through forest school to make a safe and welcoming environment.</p> <p>Children will be taught how to risk assess and manage their own risks safely.</p> <p>Chn not to climb on pallets unless safety checked and less than waist height.</p>	<p>Children may be using pallets to build or to stand on.</p> <p>Building confidence, team building, resilience and problem solving.</p>	Forest school lead

<b>Shelter building</b>	<p>Ropes - children walking into the ropes, caught on their body/neck.</p> <p>Bumped heads as they go under the shelter.</p> <p>Low branches.</p> <p>When using branches as an A frame they may fall or injury could happen when the branches are being moved.</p> <p>Injury moving large branches and sticks.</p>	Children and Adults	<p>Equipment checked regularly to ensure safe to use.</p> <p>Unsafe equipment removed immediately.</p> <p>During sessions, these activities are introduced to the children – risks and safety measures explained.</p> <p>We discuss the boundaries and how to be safe using them.</p> <p>During forest school children will be shown how to move about with large sticks and branches.</p> <p>Sticks should be held next to our leg when we are moving, we should not run or point sticks towards others.</p> <p>Encourage team work when moving large branches.</p>	<p>Children are encouraged to identify and manage their risk.</p> <p>Children encouraged to support each other.</p> <p>Rules and boundaries will be embedded through forest school to make a safe and welcoming environment.</p>	<p>Developing communication skills, fine and gross motor skills.</p> <p>Improving confidence but allowing for social experiences and problem solving.</p> <p>Team building and resilience activities.</p> <p>Physical development, social skills, problem solving and more.</p> <p>Plenty of teaching points about successful shelters and habitats.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Ropes and string</b>	<p>Ropes - children walking into the ropes, caught on their body/neck.</p>	Children and Adults	<p>Equipment checked regularly to ensure safe to use.</p> <p>During sessions, these activities are introduced to the children - – risks and safety measures explained.</p> <p>We discuss the boundaries and how to be safe using them.</p> <p>Safety rules will be made clear.</p>	<p>Children are encouraged to identify and manage their risk.</p> <p>Children encouraged to support each other.</p>	<p>Fine motor skills, improves resilience and problem solving.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Slack lines</b>	<p>Children could fall off the line.</p> <p>Walking or running into the line.</p> <p>Trips</p> <p>Bumps to heads on the ratchet.</p>	Children and adults	<p>We discuss the boundaries and how to be safe using them. Safety rules will be made clear.</p> <p>Adults will demonstrate the safe way of using the slack line before use.</p>	<p>Children are encouraged to identify and manage their risk.</p> <p>Children encouraged to support and encourage each other.</p>	<p>Improving gross motor skills, confidence, taking turns and social interaction.</p>	Forest school lead
<b>Pond on site</b>	<p>Falling into pond – illness.</p> <p>Drowning.</p>	Children & adults	<p>Chn to be reminded not to enter pond area.</p> <p>No pond dipping to take place until pond fence secured and safe platform created.</p>	<p>Adults to ensure chn do not enter pond area.</p> <p>New fence to be erected when site can be secured from the public.</p>	<p>Ecosystems within pond.</p> <p>Endangered wildlife – newts.</p> <p>Chn learning about pondlife.</p>	Forest school lead

<b>Using berries in craft and activities.</b>	Children may want to eat the berries.  If eaten, could cause sickness.	Children & adults	Children are reminded and taught not to put anything in their mouths during forest school sessions.  Children are reminded the berries are used for craft and not to be eaten.  Use berries which are safe - Blackberries Elderberries (cook them before use to remove toxins).	Forest school lead to research all berries found on site.  Discussion with children about the risk of berries, why we want berries at forest school (for the birds and other wildlife).  Reminders how to keep ourselves and others safe.	Learning the history of dying, ink, paints and use of colour in fabrics.  Providing opportunity for creativity, self-expression and experimentation.  Use of tools and methods to create ink or natural paint.  Learning about flora and it's place in our ecosystem.	Forest School Lead
<b>Use of the toilet</b>	Privacy and safeguarding  Hygiene of toilet	Children	Toilet to be used inside a tent / shelter.  Children to ask before using the toilet. Adult to remain nearby outside the tent to ensure only one child at a time.  Tent door to be closed as much as possible (due to light) to allow privacy.  Forest School lead to empty at the end or when full and clean for next session.  Hand sanitiser used after using toilet.	Children to be taught how to use the toilet and tent appropriately while at Forest School.	We have a camping toilet to prevent children asking to return to school to use the toilet, which would then remove 2 adults from Forest School.	Forest School Lead
<b>Tree Climbing</b>	Falls	Children & adults	Ensure children do not climb higher than the adults head.  For trees next to a fence, ensure children do not climb too far over, in case they fall onto the fence.  Adults do not physically help the child down. Please talk them down, advising where they could put their hands or feet. You may wish to position your body to break a fall. Please seek support from the forest school lead if needed.  Adults to ensure there are no items / objects within the landing area.	Children are supported to complete their own risk assessments when climbing: <u>Prompt questions:</u> If I climb up, can I get down? How thick is the branch? Will it take my weight? Is the branch bending or brittle and likely to snap? What might happen if I am not climbing safely? Am I keeping my swinging feet away from other climbers? Are their swinging feet above me?  When climbing, children are reminded to complete their own risk assessment: - Compare the thickness of the branch to their own wrist. If the branch is thinner, it is not likely to take their weight and they should not climb onto it. - Notice where other children are and not all climb at the same time. - Climb with at least 3 points of contact on the tree at all times - hands, knees, feet and bottom. - To check what is on the ground below the tree, what are they going to land on? Objects or other children? - What will I land on?	Experiences to build confidence, resilience and teamwork.	Forest school lead

<b>Tools</b>  <b>PLEASE SEE SEPARATE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR THE SPECIFIC TOOLS</b>	An injury could occur – cut, sprain, burn.	Children & adults	Small ratio 1:1 initially.  Start by introducing peelers as the children build their confidence this can be assessed and moved onto different tools.	Rules and boundaries will be embedded through forest school to make a safe and welcoming environment.  All sharp tools / equipment to be stored in a locked cupboard – out of reach of chn until being used under supervision.	Experiences to build confidence, resilience and teamwork.  Gaining skills on using tools safely, how to store them and look after them.  Learning how to make new things that could be used to develop our forest school.  Lots to links to the curriculum.	Forest school lead
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### Dynamic Risk Assessment.

Forest school risk assessments must be flexible and on-going. The Forest School Leader must be continuously assessing the site and consider:

- Adverse weather conditions – strong wind and extreme heat or cold may have an impact on the session. Sessions may require adjustments in the lengths of time, venue or could even be cancelled.
- Strangers – should a stranger approach, children should be called to a safe place within the site along with the adults, adults to count children. Forest school leader to explain the situation to the stranger and ask them to move on.
- Injury to Forest School Leader – All adults to remain calm, depending on the severity, other adults to assemble the children together, count the children and escort them to school. If severe injury, children should be move away, emergency services called and a member of the Senior Leadership Team must be contacted and informed.
- Injury to an adult – All adults to remain calm, depending on the severity, Forest School Leader to assemble the children together, count the children and escort them to school. If severe injury, children should be moved away, emergency services called and a member of the Senior Leadership Team must be contacted and informed.
- Accidents/Injury to child – All minor accidents must be reported to the Forest School Leader, dealt with by a trained first aider and recorded. All Major accidents must be dealt with in line with first aid guidance by a first aid trained member of staff, reported to the Forest School Leader, emergency services contacted, reported to SLT, parents called and if applicable the local authority and Ofsted. All accidents must be recorded appropriately in a timely manner.
- Emergency - All adults to remain calm, depending on the severity, Forest School Leader to assemble the children together, count the children and escort them to school. If severe, children should be moved away, emergency services called and a member of the Senior Leadership Team must be contacted and informed.
- Contacting emergency services – before each session Forest School Leader to ensure mobile is obtained and charged. Check mobile has a good service from the Forest school site.
- Fire at the setting – If this is a small fire, Forest School Leader to use water to put the fire out. For any fire that is unmanageable, emergency services to be informed, children to be counted and returned safely to school, site secured to prevent anyone entering, SLT to be informed and Forest School Leader to remain near the site to wait for emergency services.
- Lockdown – children gathered and counted. If appropriate, site to be secured to prevent anyone else entering, all adults and to remain calm and move toward the copper beach. Forest School Leader to be in contact with the school.
- Dogs – If a dog arrives on site, children will be encouraged to remain calm, stand still and a member of staff will ensure the dog is put onto a lead and moved away from the site. The situation will be explained to the owner.

## **SNAKES:**

### **Preventing snake bites**

Follow the advice listed below if you're in an area where venomous snakes are found:

Look out for warning notices on heaths and commons.

Wear boots and long trousers.

Never pick up a snake, even if you think it's harmless or it appears dead.

Never put your hand in a hole or crevice (for example, between rocks) – if you need to retrieve something, stand well back and use a stick to reach it.

If you find yourself very close to a snake, stand completely still – most snakes only strike at moving targets. The snake will escape without harming you if you remain calm and still.

### **What to do after a snake bite**

Immediately after being bitten by a snake you should:

Remain calm and don't panic – snake bites, particularly those that occur in the UK, usually aren't serious and are only very rarely deadly.

Try to remember the shape, size and colour of the snake.

Keep the part of your body that's been bitten as still as possible to prevent the venom spreading around your body.

Remove jewellery and watches from the bitten limb as they could cut into your skin if the limb swells.

Do not attempt to remove any clothing, but loosen clothing if possible.

Dial 999 immediately after being bitten by a snake to ask for an ambulance, or go straight to your nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department.

### **If you or someone you're with is bitten by a snake, you should NOT:**

Try to suck the venom out of the bite.

Try to cut the venom out of the bite or make it bleed.

Rub anything into the wound or apply ice, heat or chemicals.

Leave someone who's been bitten on their own.

Put anything around the bitten limb to stop the spread of venom (such as a tight pressure band, tourniquet or ligature) as it won't help, and can cause swelling or make it worse; it could also damage the limb, leading to the need for amputation.

Try to catch or kill the snake.

### **Symptoms of snake bites:**

Venomous snakes can sometimes bite without injecting venom. This is called a "dry bite", and it causes mild pain from the snake's teeth puncturing the skin as well as anxiety. If, after an adder bite, there are no other symptoms, such as swelling, it's probably a dry bite.

### **Symptoms of an adder bite when venom has been injected include:**

Severe pain at the location of the bite.

Swelling, redness and bruising at the location of the bite, spreading up the bitten limb.

Feeling sick (nausea) followed by vomiting.

Diarrhoea.

Itchy lumps on the skin (hives or nettle rash).

Swelling of the lips, tongue, gums and throat.

Breathing difficulties with wheezing, similar to asthma.

Mental confusion, dizziness or fainting.

An irregular heartbeat.

### **In the most severe cases, a venomous snake bite may cause:**

Extensive swelling, blistering and eventually tissue death (gangrene) in the area of the bite.

Paralysis – starting with drooping of the upper eyelids and progressing down the body to produce an inability to swallow, breathe or move.

Shock and loss of consciousness.

Kidney failure with little or no urine being passed.

Massive blood loss – as a result of bleeding from the mouth, nose and wounds, vomiting blood, and passing blood in urine or stools.

Death.



## **Anaphylaxis**

In a small number of people, a snake bite can trigger a severe reaction, known as anaphylaxis or anaphylactic shock. This can occur immediately after a bite or several hours later.

## **Shock**

Someone who's been bitten by a snake may go into shock. Shock is a life-threatening condition that occurs when there's an insufficient supply of oxygen to the body. Symptoms of shock include:

Faintness or collapsing

Pale, cold, clammy skin

Sweating

Rapid, shallow breathing

Weakness and dizziness

Blindness

Feeling sick and possibly vomiting

Drowsiness or loss of consciousness

After calling an ambulance, lay the person down and raise and support their legs. Use a coat or blanket to keep them warm.



Adders have a dark zigzag stripe down their back



Grass snakes have black flecks or bands, and a yellow collar behind the head