

Educate U

Forest School Handbook



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Handbook Declaration

Date of Production: 05/09/2025

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This document has been supplied to all staff and volunteers who hold a regular role as part of our Forest School programme.

Staff will read and sign they have acknowledged the Handbook through the Smartlog Program System.

A Forest School Approach to Learning and Development

'Forest School programmes offer a transformative, holistic approach to learning and development. Forest School programmes promote the individual development of the whole child or learner with experiences integrated offering Social, Physical, Intellectual, Communication, Cultural, Creative, Emotional and Spiritual dimensions for personal development.' The Forest School Association.

Forest schools are an opportune environment for children to achieve deep learning through play. As part of this approach, adults are expected to facilitate play as scaffolds to learning, rather than to disrupt it through intervention.

Educate U Forest School

Vision Statement

The vision Educate U Forest School endeavours to achieve is the cultivation of happy and kind individuals, who have been given the nurture and freedom needed to develop their confidence, independence and resilience. We hope our learners will develop a love of the natural world and life-long respect for all living beings.

Ethos

The ethos of our Forest School is centred around the belief that learning is a developmental process which benefits all aspects of an individual, those around them, their community, and the natural world. Facilitating, rather than controlling learning through play, exploration and risk taking, encourages individuals to take ownership of their own learning. This approach promotes improved self-esteem, resilience and problem-solving skills, as well as broadening our learners intellectual, social and emotional development.

Principles

This ethos is underpinned by six key Forest School principles:

1. A long-term process.

Our participants will attend Forest School weekly, across each term, for a minimum of two hours per session.

2. Promotes holistic development.

By promoting an emotional, social, physical, spiritual and intellectual approach, our Forest School can facilitate the development of resilient, confident, creative, and independent learners.

3. Elements of risk taking

We will provide a safe enough environment for risk taking/risky play, to be explored in an appropriate way for both the individual, and their surroundings.

4. A natural environment

Our setting is located within an area of ancient woodland, enabling our participants to gain understanding, and form an attachment to the natural world.

5. Qualified and reflective practitioners

Our Forest School is led by two Level 3 qualified practitioners, with high adult-to-child ratios. Staff are committed to maintaining and improving on their professional development.

6. Learner-led

We will provide the scaffolding based on the learner's current topic and opportunities for learner-led development and learning outcomes.

Play Policy

At EducateU Forest School, play is central to children's learning, development and wellbeing. We recognise play as an essential process through which children explore the world, build relationships, develop resilience and gain confidence in themselves and their environment. In line with the Forest School Association principles, our sessions are learner-centred and support holistic development through regular and long-term engagement with the natural environment. Play is primarily child-led, allowing children to follow their own interests, ideas and curiosities at their own pace. Children are encouraged to

explore, investigate, take appropriate risks and problem-solve through hands-on experiences.

While Forest School sessions at EducateU are thoughtfully planned and linked to curriculum, play remains led by choice and curiosity. Adults observe, support and extend learning where appropriate, responding to children's needs and interests rather than directing outcomes. We value the learning that emerges naturally through play and exploration.

Practitioners act as facilitators by providing a safe and inclusive environment. Risk is managed through dynamic risk assessment and formal risk assessments which allows children to develop their independence and self-awareness while remaining safe. All forms of play are respected and valued, including physical, imaginative, exploratory and quiet play.

EducateU Forest School is committed to safeguarding children's right to play. We believe play supports emotional wellbeing, promotes positive behaviour and fosters a meaningful connection with nature. Play is recognised as learning and it is actively encouraged and protected within all Forest School sessions.

Staff roles, responsibilities and ratios

Roles

Level 3 Forest School Leader/Level 3 Teaching Assistant/Outdoor First Aid	Hope Bridle
Level 3 Forest School Leader/Forester	Tom Lapraik

All staff attending the site are DBS checked.

Responsibilities

Forest School Leader will:

- Complete and enforce necessary admin, such as risk assessments, impact analysis, policies etc.
- Plan, deliver and reflect upon a Forest School programme which is enriching to our learner group and considerate of their needs.
- Communicate/delegate tasks to other staff members when needed.
- Maintain the Forest School site, ensuring a safe-enough environment for exploration and play.
- Make clear site boundaries to staff and learners.

- Carry necessary first aid equipment and administer as required.
- Promote participant safety and well-being through thorough planning and appropriate intervention, for example, 'No Pick, No Lick' message.
- Provide guidance and advice to support staff for consistency and to ensure Best Practice.

All staff will:

- Model appropriate behaviour and safe practice, for example, 'No Pick, No Lick' message.
- Facilitate and scaffold learner-led ideas.
- Create a positive learning atmosphere, based on individual needs.
- Encourage good relationships, based on respect of each other and the environment.
- Stay up to date with continuing professional development relevant to their role.

Ratios

We will ensure high adult-to-child ratios, with a minimum of 1:3. The additional staff required for 1:1 learners will be arranged as needed by the class teachers. Appropriate staff ratios will be organised by the school to safely accompany the learners to and from the site as required.

Behaviour Policy

Behaviour Management

In line with Educate U's Trauma-Informed Approach, at Forest School we embrace the mantra 'all behaviour is communication'. Staff are trained in the practice of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy (PACE) to implement the school's Protect, Relate, Regulate, Reflect framework model. Staff will use evidence-based strategies to support learners when they are feeling dysregulated in a PACE-ful, way, while staying attune to their affect.

As an extended part of the school, Forest School will proactively avoid sanctions and punishments. However, clear links between behaviour and consequences will be established. Any consequence employed will be directly linked to the function of the behaviour presented, making it meaningful to the individual and their life-learning skills. As a non-consequence school, we maintain a consistent approach through boundaries. Such boundaries may vary on an individual basis, depending on the needs of the learner and function of their behaviours. In circumstances of repetitive or extreme behaviour, a positive behaviour plan and

risk assessment will be formulated. The school site and Forest School will communicate, ensuring any individual behaviour plan or risk assessment, is known to staff to provide consistency for the learner.

Positive Handling

At times, it may be necessary for staff to employ physical intervention as a response to certain behaviours, however, such intervention would only be used with demonstrable consideration for the learner's welfare, in their best interest and in proportion to the situation. Any physical intervention that is needed to be performed must be 'Reasonable, Proportionate and Necessary' and follow in line with Educate U's Behaviour Policy. Staff are trained by an accredited positive intervention organisation and will respond to behaviour based upon the principle that de-escalation attempts should come first, wherever suitable. Poor behaviour on site does not mean a student can have restrictive force used.

Bullying

Staff are trained in different types of bullying and their identification. They are also aware of the impact additional factors, such as trauma and SEND, may have on the incidences/effects of bullying within our settings. At Forest School, staff are expected to stay vigilant for signs of bullying, challenge derogatory/discriminatory/abusive behaviour, and report any findings promptly. Educate U has a comprehensive Anti-bullying Policy, which outlines the roles and responsibilities of named staff members and next steps to be implemented. *For further information, see Educate U's Trauma Informed Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies.*

Equality Policy

SEND and Trauma

All pupils at Educate U will have experienced trauma, or trauma and SEND. Enabling our learners to participate in Forest School is fundamental part of our programme. Staff will be aware of our learners individual SEND, emotional or behavioural needs, and how best to support them during sessions, in line with their EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan).

Inclusion

Reasonable adjustments will be made to promote inclusion, through enabling attendance and participation. By delivering a supportive and inclusive environment, we aim to assist participants to confidently fulfil their aspirations,

achieve their best, and gain new skills and experiences beneficial to their transition to adulthood.

For further information, see the Educate U SEND Policy, formulated in in line with statutory guidance and legislation.

Safeguarding Policy

Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection

Every child/vulnerable adult has the right to be kept safe from danger and learn in a safe and secure environment. All staff involved in our Forest School have received safeguarding and child protection training and are aware of their statutory responsibilities in line with legislation. All staff hold relevant DBS checks, will stay alert, and report concerns in a timely manner. All safeguarding will remain the responsibility of the staff at Educate U.

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Emma Jenkinson

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead- Mark Brown

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead- Jared Evans

Disclosures/Accusations

If a disclosure/accusation is made:

- The person making the disclosure must be listened to and believed.
- Questioning should be avoided but remain open-ended if necessary.
- You cannot promise to keep the disclosure a secret but may reassure sharing will be done on a need-to-know basis.
- Any disclosures should be written up as soon as possible, in the person's own words, including the time, date and details of those present.
- Disclosures should be referred to the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible.
- In the event of immediate harm, call 999.

If a disclosure/accusation is made against an adult:

- All allegations against an adult must be taken seriously and acted on immediately.
- Report the concern to the DSL as soon as possible.
- If the allegation involves the DSL, report to the DDSL or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Do not inform the adult involved until advice has been sought, to avoid affecting any investigation.

- Make a written record as soon as possible, including dates, times, what was said and who was present.
- Follow local safeguarding procedures and seek guidance from the LADO.
- The adult may be suspended if advised while the matter is investigated.
- The child's safety and wellbeing must remain the priority at all times.
- If there is an immediate risk of harm, call 999.

Radicalisation

If a staff member has concerns that a child/young person has been radicalised or is involved in extremism, they should report to the DSL/DDSL who will decide on next steps, including contacting Prevet/Channel. In case of immediate risk or danger, the staff member should contact 999.

Missing Children

A register of all learners will be taken at the beginning and end of each session. If 1 learner goes missing during a session, an immediate search of the area should be conducted lasting no more than 10 minutes, and the school office should be informed (**01903 297906**). After 10 minutes, staff should regroup via radio communication, then conduct an extended search for no longer than 15 minutes. If the learner has not been located, a 999 call should be placed with a description of the missing child, and the school office should be updated. Staff members should remain onsite to co-ordinate further searches and log events. Necessary paperwork should be completed after the event. For the other students on site, there should also be allocated staff members to stay with them to ensure their safety. These should support the 1:1 ratios where possible and ensure that these students feel safe and supported during the event. The staff staying with the children should encourage distraction activities that do not involve moving around, in order to avoid another child going missing whilst the search is being completed.

Mobile Phones/Social Media

Learners are not permitted to have mobile phones throughout the school day for their own safety and protection. Mobile phones are collected and returned at the start and end of each day; therefore, learners should not have mobile phones at Forest School. If a learner has been identified as having a phone, they will be supported to hand it to a staff member. Students may use a school phone to contact caregivers if necessary. The use of school, or personal phones, is permitted by staff in necessary circumstances. Pictures should not be taken by staff on personal phones and staff social media accounts should be

private. The school does not share information via social media or upload pupil pictures/information to its website.

For further information, see the Educate U Absconding and Mobile Phone Policies, and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy formulated in in line with statutory guidance and legislation.

Data Protection

Data Handling

Data sharing will only be conducted when necessary, in line with the schools GDPR Policy, and on a need-to-know basis. Learners should be informed that information sharing may be necessary following a safeguarding disclosure. All personal data, such as parental consent forms and medical details, are managed by the school office, and stored in locked cabinets, or electronically on Bromcom.

For further information, see the Educate U Confidentiality and GDPR Policies.

Confidentially

Confidentiality is a whole school issue which is respected at Forest School. Staff are given guidance on maintaining confidentiality, to promote trust across the school community, and protect and maintain our learner's best interests.

Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

Insurances

Our insurances are provided by Marsh Commercial and held by Educateuwestsussex Ltd. They consist of:

- Employers Liability- Company protection for employee accident/injury/illness claims.
- Public Liability- Company protection for public accident/injury/damage claims
- Products Liability- Company protection if a product made/sold causes harm.
- Professional Indemnity- Company and individual employee protection against damage/harm caused by mistake when working.

Fires

Our campfire is at the heart of our Forest School site, giving our learners a sense of belonging, while teaching them life-long skills. Learners are supported to be

responsible for their own safety, and that of others, improving their self-confidence and self-esteem. Our campfire is in a designated area, positioned away from overhanging branches and made within a fire bowl for safety and ecological considerations. A risk assessment has been conducted and will be adjusted, or adhered to, each session as necessary.

Fire Lighting:

- Our Forest School leaders are trained in conducting, and supervising fire lighting.
- They will ensure the area is safe prior to fire lighting, and in line with the risk assessment.
- A fire blanket, plunge bucket with cup, burns kit, and two sets of gauntlets will be positioned close to the fire.
- Boundaries and expectations will be established with staff and learners prior to fire lighting and repeated throughout.
- All staff and learners should have loose clothing tucked away, and long hair tied back.
- The Respect Position and should be explained and modelled when fire lighting/feeding.
- A fire monitor will be allocated by the Forest School Lead to maintain the fire and ensure safe practice.
- When lighting/feeding fires, learners will have 1:1 supervision.

Extinguishing:

- All fires must be thoroughly extinguished.
- Large remains of wood should be separated from one another.
- The fire must be doused down using water, targeting hot spots gradually and stirring until there is no smoke or steam.
- Fire remnants will be removed from the site when safe, leaving no trace.

Fires will not be lit when there has been three or more consecutive days of hot weather (current local threshold 27 degrees Celsius).

In case of accidental fires/fire spread that cannot be managed with a fire blanket, there is access to additional extinguishing methods on site. These are to only be used by trained and qualified staff members. In the rare situation that fires are inextinguishable, the emergency services will be called.

In the event of a fire breaking out at the Forest School site, all participants must stop their activity immediately and listen for the leader's ringing of the hand bell and verbal instruction. The Forest School leader and supporting adults will calmly but firmly direct everyone away from the fire area, using the pre-established

safe exit routes. Children and adults should walk quickly, but not run, staying together to avoid panic or separation. No one should attempt to collect personal belongings, tools, or resources from the site once the evacuation has been called. A head count will be taken as groups move, and a register to be completed once the whole party has reached the designated safe meeting point at the car park. On arrival at the car park, participants must remain together while the leader carries out a full roll call and calls the emergency services. No-one is to re-enter the site until the leader has confirmed it is safe to do so or the emergency services have taken control.

Tools Policy

At Educate U Forest School, tools are used to support the development of practical skills, confidence and independence. While tool use involves an element of risk, it is managed through careful planning, risk assessment and close supervision by trained adults. The tools used during sessions include bow saws, folding saws, secateurs, loppers, hand drills, palm drills, fire strikers, fixed blade knives, potato peelers, hammers and billhooks. These are introduced gradually, depending on the learner's age, ability and readiness.

Forest School Leaders will ensure all tools are safe, well maintained and stored securely. Tools will be checked before and after use, and any damaged equipment will be removed immediately. Clear demonstrations and safety instructions will be given before use. Learners will be supported to carry, use and pass tools safely and higher-risk tools such as saws, knives and billhooks will be used with close supervision, including 1:1 where appropriate.

A designated tool area will be used to provide enough space for safe working. Activities will be stopped if safe practice is not followed. Appropriate PPE, such as gloves, will be used where needed, and long hair and loose clothing will be secured. There will be hair bands on site if learners do not have any with them to support this. At the end of each session, tools will be collected, counted and stored safely. Learners will be encouraged to take responsibility for using tools safely and respectfully.

Ticks

Ticks are small spider-like creatures which can attach themselves under the skin of animals and people. They live in outdoor environments, particularly grassy and wooded ones. Once attached, they appear as small pinheads on the skin, dark brown or grey in colour, which may grow to the size of a small wart. Ticks can carry Lyme disease, which can be transferred to humans if they are bitten. Ticks should be removed as soon as possible to reduce this risk.



Staff will:

- Stay vigilant to the presence of ticks on learners.
- Will obtain parental/guardian consent for on-site removal.
- If a bite has been identified, the first aider will draw around any inflamed tissue for reference.
- The first aider will remove any identified ticks immediately using a specified tool and technique.
- If removal is not possible, they will arrange for the learner to be collected.

Parents/guardians should:

- Send the learner in suitable Forest School clothing, with arms (weather permitting) and legs covered, and with closed sturdy shoes.
- Be alert to the presence of ticks and any associated rashes.
- Seek medical attention if a tick cannot be removed, has broken in situ, or if inflammation spreads.
- If a bulls eye type rash appears around the site, this could be a sign of Lyme disease and immediate medical attention should be sought.



More inflammation on Tick awareness and Lyme disease can be found on the UK Health Security Agency website.

Clothing

We aim to deliver our Forest School programme all year round. Therefore, suitable and appropriate clothing is essential for our learners to fully enjoy Forest School in all weathers. Parents/guardians are expected to check local weather forecasts prior to sessions, providing learners with the necessary clothing as required.

Each session:

- Sturdy, suitable, closed footwear (ideally waterproof)
- Long trousers tucked in socks
- Long sleeved top
- Long hair tied up
- Waterproof jacket and trousers

Weather dependent:

- Hats (hot or cold weather)
- Gloves
- Multiple layers
- Extra socks

We will get MUDDY!!! Clothing should be prepared with outdoor activities in mind. Stains/damage may occur.

Food and Drink

We will ask parents/guardians of learners to supply a filled water bottle and packed lunch. On site we will offer learners a hot drink, refill water if needed and supply a campfire snack/light lunch. This may not always be to the learner's taste, which is why a packed lunch is requested. For students that qualify for Free School Meals, they will have access to food within school and on site and any food that needs to be made in school, must be made before staff attend site with the students. On site, there will be the main lunch that is cooked on the open fire and fruit and yogurts will also be provided as a snack throughout each session.

Food Hygiene

We will maintain high food hygiene standards in relation to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food. All staff hold a basic food hygiene certificate and will ensure that:

- Food being used during Forest School sessions will be stored in a hygienic manner.

- Food preparation will take place in a specified zone, with chopping boards for raw meat/cooked meat and other produce.
- All medical records will be checked to ensure that no food item or ingredient is given to an adult or child with an allergy to it.
- Dietary requirements and preferences will be respected and catered for where reasonable.
- Food cooked on the fire will be consumed within 4 hours of preparation.
- All utensils, crockery etc will be checked to ensure they are clean before use.
- Waste food will be disposed of in a bin and taken off site where it will be disposed of safely.
- Staff will model excellent food hygiene standards when preparing and cooking food on the fire which children will be expected to follow.
- Washing up will be done with hot soapy water or taken away from the site to be cleaned.
- All rubbish and recycling will be removed from site and disposed of appropriately by the Forest School leaders.
- We will follow guidance set out by the Forest School Association and work in line with HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) principles to ensure food is prepared, stored and served safely at all times.
- Forest School Leaders will ensure good hand hygiene is maintained, food is protected from contamination such as dirt, leaves and insects and that raw and cooked foods are kept separate to reduce the risk of cross contamination. All staff involved in food preparation will be appropriately trained, and allergens will be carefully managed in line with medical information held for each learner.
- Food will be stored appropriately, with consideration given to temperature control, expiry dates and safe handling of high-risk foods such as meat and dairy. Utensils and equipment will be cleaned and sanitised after use, and separate equipment will be used where necessary.

Hand Washing

The site provides hand basins with running water for everyone to use and soap will also be provided to ensure good hand hygiene. When drying hands after washing, it is good practice to use single use hand towels to minimise the risk of any cross contamination.

Toilet Facilities

There is a toilet block located near the car park with individual cubicles for everyone to use. Staff will also accompany students to the toilet block to ensure the safety of the pupils whilst they attend the Forest School sessions.

First Aid

Our Forest School leaders hold First Aid certification and will be the designated site first aiders, although other attending staff members will also be first aid trained. A fully stocked, and regularly audited First Aid and Burns Kit, will be maintained and kept on site at all times in the dedicated First Aid zone.

In the event of illness or injury to any child or adult during a Forest School session, First Aid will be administered and recorded in the First Aid recording book. All personal medications, e.g. inhalers and Insulin Injectors, should be brought to site by support staff and highlighted to the Forest School Lead. Please see below a list of First Aid kit essentials:

- 50 x Sterile Plasters
- Sterile gauze dressings
- Small: 6-8
- Medium: 4-6
- Large: 4-6
- 4 x Eye pad dressings
- 4 x Triangular bandages (for slings/splints)
- 6 x Crepe/roller bandages
- 2 x Adhesive tape
- 30 x Antiseptic wipes
- 10 x Saline solution
- 10 x Instant cold packs
- 6 x Foil blankets (hypothermia risk outdoors)
- 5 x Finger dressings
- 5 x Burn dressings
- 5 x Burn Gels
- 2 x Resuscitation face shield
- 20+ Pairs Disposable gloves (nitrile)
- Tick removal tool
- Additional Items:
 - First aid guidance leaflet / book
 - Accident report forms
 - Emergency contact list
 - Mobile phone (Trip Phone)
 - Pen

Covid-19

There are currently no government restrictions being enforced in the UK for Covid-19, including no recommendation for testing. Forest School leaders will stay up to date with any future changes that may arise. In line with our schools Covid-19 Policy, learners who have tested positive for Covid-19 will be asked not to attend for 3 days. Staff who test positive for Covid-19 will be asked not to attend for 5 days, or until they have two consecutive negative tests. Learners who feel unwell and/or have a high temperature, are asked not to attend until their temperature has subsided, and they feel well enough to do so. Staff will model and encourage general hygiene standards, including appropriate and timely handwashing.

For further information, see the Educate U Covid Policy

COSHH

During Forest school sessions, learners may encounter biological agents, micro-organisms (bacteria and fungi) and external larger parasites (ticks and mosquitos), which may carry parasites that live in these hosts that may cause hazard to health. Site specific risk assessments will be regularly completed and updated. If a particular micro-organism hazard is identified, it will be cleared, or learners will be warned and advised appropriately. Learners will be educated in ways to protect themselves from dangers associated from ingestion, e.g. no eating/licking things found in the woodland. All safety checks will be made to ensure that fuel for campfire is safe to burn.

Consideration is also given to smoke produced from the campfire. Fires will be managed carefully to reduce smoke, including using suitable dry wood and maintaining appropriate fire size. Learners and staff will be positioned safely to avoid prolonged exposure to smoke and anyone affected will be moved away from the area. Any products used on site, such as cleaning materials, fuels or first aid supplies, will be used in line with COSHH guidance. COSHH data sheets for these products will be sourced and referred to where available, ensuring safe handling, storage and use. Only appropriate products will be used within the Forest School environment, which will be stored securely away from learners. All safety checks will be carried out to ensure that materials used for fires are safe to burn and do not release harmful substances.

For further information, see the Health and Safety Executive COSHH website

Extreme/Bad Weather Procedures

High Winds and Lightning

Our site is in a woodland environment, therefore at times of high winds (gust speeds of 35mph) and or thunderstorms, sessions may be cancelled to protect the safety of learners and staff. The Forest School Leader will check the Met Office each morning of a Forest School session and make the decision as to whether the session can go ahead using this information. As much notice as reasonably possible will be given to parents/guardians on such occasions. Predicted gust speeds will be monitored the night before the session, morning of, and hourly during the session if ranging between 25-30mph and above. Forest School inspired activities will instead take place on the Educate U school site.

Rain and Snow

We are an all-season Forest School, which means there will be times when our learners experience associated weathers, such as rain and snow. To keep the sessions enjoyable, we ask parents/guardians to provide suitable clothing in line with advice given within this handbook. Shelter is available onsite. During periods of heavy rain/snow, or extreme cold, sessions may need to be cancelled due to accessibility limitations, and to protect the safety of learners and staff.

Heat

Hot weather can pose a risk to health for both learners and staff. During periods of warm/hot weather, we ask parents/guardians to supply suitable clothing, including hats and light layers which can be removed. Sun cream should be applied prior to attending the session, and a water bottle supplied. Shelter additional to the tree shade is provided on site. The safety of attendees is always at the forefront of decision making, and if deemed necessary cancellations may occur in periods of extreme heat. Additionally, fires will not be lit during such times.

Incident/Accident Procedures

Minor incident/accident

If a minor incident/accident occurs during a forest school session the following protocol should be followed:

- The Forest School Leader should be alerted.
- They will assess the situation and decide on appropriate next steps e.g. is anyone ill/injured, does the school need to be contacted. (01903 297906)
- The Forest School Leader/First Aider will administer First Aid if required.
- They will nominate another member of staff to maintain supervision of the rest of the group.
- This staff member will assess whether the rest of the group need to be called back via the Handbell.
- In this instance, they will assemble learners in a designated safe space, such as the fire circle if safe to do so, away from the accident/incident.
- A Significant Incident form should be written by Forest School Leader, and First aid form completed if necessary.

Major Incident/accident

If a major incident/accident occurs during a forest school session the following protocol should be followed:

- Forest School Leader to be alerted.
- They will nominate another member of staff to maintain supervision of the rest of the group.
- This staff member will supervise the suspension of activities; oversee prompt group assembly in a safe space away from the incident via the Handbell; and ensure suitable supervision/ratios.
- The Forest School Leader/First Aider will attend to any casualties and request additional staff as appropriate.
- If there is a casualty, a record of their state and administered medication/treatment will be kept.
- The emergency services will be contacted as necessary by the Forest School Lead or nominated staff member. Charged mobile phones are carried by Forest School Leaders.
- A nominated staff member will be directed to meet any emergency vehicles at the entrance if possible.

- The site location will be given to the operator:
- **Furzefield Scout Campsite, Dapper's Lane, Angmering, Littlehampton, BN16 4EW**
- What Three Words for car park: **paradise.fixture.diver**
- Contact will be made with the school office, and emergency contacts will be informed as soon as practicable after the incident. **(01903 297906)**
- A Significant Incident form should be written by Forest School Leader, and First aid form completed if necessary.
- The learner's safety will be maintained as the highest priority.
- The nearest Hospital to site is Worthing Hospital, Lyndhurst Road, Worthing, BN11 2HD.

RIDDOR

Certain serious accidents, injuries or dangerous occurrences must be reported in line with Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

- ☐ The Forest School Leader will be responsible for identifying if an incident is reportable.
 - Reportable incidents may include:
 - Serious injuries (e.g. fractures, amputations, loss of sight)
 - Injuries requiring hospital treatment
 - Incidents resulting in a person being unable to carry out normal duties for more than 7 days
 - Dangerous occurrences or near misses that could have caused serious harm
 - All reportable incidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) without delay using the appropriate reporting system.
 - Records of the incident must be kept, including details of what happened, who was involved, and actions taken.
 - Parents/guardians and the school will be informed as soon as possible following any serious incident.
 - All incidents will be reviewed to identify any changes needed to risk assessments or procedures to prevent reoccurrence.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a fire breaking out at the Forest School site, all participants must stop their activity immediately and listen for the leader's ringing of the hand bell and verbal instruction. The Forest School leader and supporting adults will calmly but firmly direct everyone away from the fire area, using the pre-established safe exit routes. Children and adults should walk quickly, but not run, staying together to avoid panic or separation. No one should attempt to collect personal belongings, tools, or resources from the site once the evacuation has been called.

A head count will be taken as groups move, and a register to be completed once the whole party has reached the designated safe meeting point at the car park at the 'Meeting Point' sign. On arrival at the car park, participants must remain together while the leader carries out a full roll call and calls the emergency services. No one is to re-enter the site until the leader has confirmed it is safe to do so, or the emergency services have taken control.

If an emergency evacuation of the site is deemed necessary by the Forest School Lead, they will assemble the group in a safe space via the ringing of the hand bell and nominate a staff member to maintain group supervision/ratios. The Forest School Lead will contact the school office, and learners will be returned to the school site in the way they arrived. If specific learners need evacuation, the school office may need to arrange for their collection by off-site staff or parents/guardians.

Risk Management Policy

Risk management is an important part of our Forest School programme. It is concerned with the identification of significant risks of harm and is based on the likelihood of an incident occurring, and the severity of any injury or harm if it does.

Strategies

To manage risk, we will use the following assessments:

- Site assessment- considers the risk from the site itself e.g. dead trees, poisonous flora etc.
- Daily assessment- considers daily eventualities that may impact the session e.g. weather, staff sickness etc.
- Activity assessment- considers the planned activities of the programme e.g. training, ratios, PPE.

- Ongoing assessment- A dynamic assessment continually considering unplanned or changing events.

Planning will be robust to ensure adequate safety measures are identified, communicated, and adhered to. All staff will remain vigilant to any hazards in the Forest School environment, reporting those identified to the Forest School lead immediately.

Risk Assessments

See attached to the end of the handbook as follows:

- Site Risk Assessment
- Tool Risk Assessment
- Activity Risk Assessment

Risk/benefit analysis.

Activity	Long-term Consequence	Long-term Benefit
Climbing	Serious Injury, impalement, minor injuries.	Improved physical strength, coordination, and balance. Builds confidence, problem-solving skills, and risk self-assessment.
Whittling and Woodwork (Including hammering and sawing)	Serious bleeds, nerve damage, crush injuries, minor injuries.	Develops fine motor skills, patience, and concentration/listening skills. Fosters creativity and connection with natural materials.
Fire Activities/Cooking	Burns, scaring, nerve damage, minor injuries.	Promotes independence and survival skills, self-sufficiency, and an appreciation and understanding of nature. Develops teamwork and listening skills, creativity and an understanding of food sources.
Cutting (loppers and secateurs).	Amputation, minor injuries.	Enhances practical skills, understanding of tools, and hand-eye coordination.

		Promotes problem-solving and creativity.
Woodland based Activities	Tick Borne Lyme Disease and Encephalitis, poisoning, allergic reactions, lost learners, minor injuries.	Improves environmental knowledge and creates a bond with nature. Develops navigation and map reading skills. Promotes physical activity, curiosity, confidence and independence
Stream	Drowning, hyperthermia, minor injuries.	Promotes sensory exploration, motor skills and understanding of water properties and safety. Provides opportunities for cooperative play and creativity.

Risk/Benefit Statement

A risk/benefit analysis is the comparison between a hazard's associated risk, and its long-term benefit. Risk/benefit analysis is an essential part of Forest School. Following the formulation of detailed risk assessments, and despite implementing risk reducing actions, the enriching and developmentally positive activities listed above still carry a higher level of risk. Therefore, despite reducing their likelihood thorough planning, preparation, evaluation and implementation, on rare occasion accidents may still happen. However, through risk/benefit analysis, it is clear to see the long-term life enhancing outcomes of engaging in such activities, outweigh the low likelihood of associated long-term consequences.

Items Made Onsite

- Items should never go home, alternatively photos be taken and emails sent.
- No sticks, stones, or other items that could be used as a weapon should leave the site, but again photos can be taken and shared.
- Some arts and crafts may be able to return to school, decided by the Forest School lead.
- Planned craft that can return to school will be set up on the craft table. If needed, a second space will be arranged for table craft that cannot return.
- Ambiguous items should be checked with the Forest School lead before discussing whether an item can return to school with a pupil.

- It should be specified if an item cannot return to school at the earliest opportunity, ideally before time has been invested.

Staff members will provide learners with the support, encouragement, and recognition they deserve to help build their self-esteem and sense of pride. These guidelines should be implemented in a positive way; while utilising the technology we have to share and celebrate the children's success and achievements with those not onsite.

Ecological Impact and Sustainability Strategy

Our Forest School site is situated within a beautiful woodland, ideally suited for the needs of our programme and learners. The wooded environment provides our learners with an abundance of space, within surroundings they can enjoy, explore and discover. Our Forest School Leaders will monitor the consequence of our presence on the woodland, and its inhabitants, through ecological impact assessments. They will use this information to inform the Site Manager, with the intention of protecting the site, and its flora and fauna long-term.

During sessions, we will provide ecological impact education to our learners, and explain ways in which we can reduce it, such as advising against collecting and burning dead wood. The personal experiences enjoyed at our Forest School, facilitate the development of meaningful relationships with the natural world. These relationships are the foundations of long lasting, environmentally sustainable attitudes and practices.

Communication Policy for Stakeholders

Our Forest School Leaders understand the importance of communicating effectively with all those involved in our Forest School provision. This includes but is not limited to:

- Learners- Learners are communicated with throughout each session through verbal interaction, modelling and discussion. This supports understanding of safety expectations, encourages participation and allows learners to express their needs and ideas.
- Parents/guardians- Parents and carers are contacted before sessions via email or school systems to share key information such as clothing, permissions and any changes such as cancellations to sessions. They may also be contacted after sessions to share updates, achievements or concerns and immediately in the event of an incident. This ensures learners are supported consistently between home and Forest School.

- School staff- School staff are communicated with regularly through face-to-face discussion, phone or school systems before, during and after sessions. This allows information to be shared regarding individual needs, behaviour, risk assessments and any incidents, ensuring consistency of care. Lesson plans for each session will also be emailed out in advance to all staff by the Forest School Leader.
- Additional staff/volunteers- Additional staff and volunteers are briefed before sessions, either verbally or in writing, to ensure they understand their roles, responsibilities and any specific needs of the group. Ongoing communication during sessions supports safe practice and effective teamwork.
- Landowners- Our Landowner is the Scouts group that own the site, so can be communicated with face-to-face. When Forest School sessions are not running, the landowner can be contacted via phone or email to discuss the site use, access, maintenance and any concerns. This helps to maintain a positive relationship and ensures the woodland is used appropriately.
- The Local Authority- The Local Authority may be contacted when necessary via formal channels for safeguarding concerns, health and safety guidance or legal requirements. This ensures the setting remains compliant and follows best practice.

Forest school Leaders will ensure admin and record keeping is well managed. We will pay care and attention to ensure any relevant and necessary information is requested/shared professionally when suitable, and in a timely manner.

Visitor Policy

At Educate U Forest School, the safety and wellbeing of learners is always the priority. All visitors to the site, whether planned or unplanned, will be managed in line with safeguarding procedures.

Planned visitors:

- All planned visitors must be agreed in advance with the Forest School Leader and the Headteacher, or a member of SLT in their absence.
- Visitors will be made aware of site rules, boundaries and safeguarding expectations on arrival.

- Visitors should have relevant DBS clearance and be supervised at all times.
- Visitors will not be left alone with learners and will remain under the supervision of a member of staff.
- The purpose of the visit will be clear and relevant to the Forest School programme.
- Visitors will also sign in via the Forest School Visitor book and wear a red lanyard to show staff and pupils they are a visitor of the site.

Unplanned visitors:

- Any unknown or unexpected visitors will be approached by a member of staff and their purpose on site clarified.
- Visitors will not be allowed access to the group unless authorised by the Headteacher and the Forest School Leader.
- Learners will be kept at a safe distance while the situation is assessed.
- If a visitor raises concern or behaves inappropriately, they will be asked to leave the site immediately. In this instance, the school and/or emergency services will be contacted.

All visitors will be expected to follow the guidance set out in this handbook, including safeguarding, health and safety and behaviour expectations. Records of significant visits or concerns will be documented where appropriate.

Parent/Carer Communications and Permissions

Parents and carers will be provided with clear information prior to Forest School sessions, including details about clothing, activities and any changes to arrangements. Written consent will be obtained before learners attend, including consent for participation, medical information and emergency contact details. Ongoing communication will be maintained through email or phone to share updates, achievements or any concerns. Parents and carers will be contacted as soon as possible in the event of an incident or if further information is required to support the learner.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

At Educate U Forest School, we are committed to creating an inclusive environment where all learners, staff and visitors are treated with respect and feel valued. We recognise and celebrate differences in individuals' backgrounds, abilities and experiences, and aim to ensure that everyone can access and participate fully in Forest School sessions.

We promote equality of opportunity and do not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or background. Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to support individual needs, including those related to SEND and trauma, ensuring all learners can engage safely and meaningfully.

Positive relationships are encouraged, and all members of the Forest School community are expected to treat others with kindness and respect. Any incidents of discrimination, bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and dealt with in line with school policies.

All staff share responsibility for promoting inclusive practice and will model appropriate behaviour, challenge discrimination and support a safe and welcoming environment for all.



FURZEFIELD SCOUT CAMPSITE

CONDITIONS OF USE



Thank you for choosing Furze Field Scout Campsite. Please read and follow these conditions to help keep the site safe, clean and enjoyable for everyone.

 1. BOOKINGS - Bookings must be made via email with at least 2 weeks' notice. - Access will only be given to paid invoices.  3. VEHICLES No vehicles are allowed onto the campsite beyond the car park.  5. RUBBISH + CLEANING - Take all rubbish home with you, A £50 charge will be made for rubbish left on site. - Leave whole site, including toilet blocks and communal spaces, clean and tidy.  7. RESPECT THE SITE - Do not damage trees, shrubs, fences, barriers or any property. - Nothing to be stored on site without prior approval. - No pallets, fencing or treated wood.  9. ACCESS + KEYS - After opening, return keys to lock box ready for next guest entry or your departure. - Lock all buildings and gates when the site is unattended.	 2. APPROVED USE Use permitted for Scout, Guide and other approved youth groups with Public Liability Insurance. Users must also follow rules of their own organisation  4. FIRES + WATER - Fires only in designated fire pits (concrete based only, no bricks). Fires should never be left unattended. - Ensure water buckets are full and ready. - All water on site is drinking water.  6. DOGS + SMOKING - Dogs are not allowed on site except for assistance dogs. - Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere on site.  8. TOILETS + FACILITIES - Limited toilet rolls and hand soap are provided. Overnight stays, please bring your own and replenish what is used. - Wash cooking equipment in the outdoor washing area, NOT toilet basins.  10. ACTIVITIES - All types of firearms are prohibited. - Archery is permitted only with prior approval from Site Team with appropriate Risk Assessment.
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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

 Please report any accidents, safeguarding concerns or near misses to the team.	 Failure to comply with these conditions may result in future use being refused.	 Please be aware that overhead power cables run across the site	 Please report any damage to the site team on 07593 924261
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furze fieldcampsite@alscouts.org.uk



THANK YOU FOR HELPING US LOOK AFTER FURZEFIELD CAMPSITE FOR EVERYONE

Updated June

